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**ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE FIELD HEARING**

**"Identifying Unique Challenges for Small, Rural and  
Disadvantaged Communities in Accessing and Maintaining  
Drinking Water and Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure  
Services (Part I)"**

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**Transcript of Field Hearing  
in Beckley, West Virginia  
October 14, 2021  
10:00 a.m.**

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**U.S. Senator Thomas R. Carper, Chairman**

**Reported by: Teresa L. Harvey, RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR  
New River Court Reporting Services, LLC  
101 Shadow Lane, Beckley, WV 25801**

1           The following hearing was taken at the Raleigh  
2 County Courthouse, Courtroom Number 3, 222 Main Street,  
3 Beckley, West Virginia, commencing at 10:00 a.m., before  
4 Teresa L. Harvey, a Notary Public, Registered Diplomate  
5 Reporter, and Certified Realtime Reporter within and for  
6 the State of West Virginia.

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

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2           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Good morning. I'm Tom  
3 Carper, United States Senator from Delaware and former  
4 governor of Delaware and a native of West Virginia,  
5 Beckley, as it turns out. So this is very much a home  
6 game for me and just a thrill. I said to Senator Capito  
7 and Senator Manchin coming in, it's just a thrill to be  
8 here.

9           And I want to thank Senator Capito, who is the  
10 lead Republican presiding -- who presides with me over  
11 the committee on -- Senate Committee on Environment and  
12 Public Works. And we have a great partnership. And one  
13 of the things we've worked on for quite a while is  
14 infrastructure, and along with Senator Manchin, who  
15 chairs the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. But  
16 it's a shared responsibility and it's something that  
17 we're delighted and honored to be able to work on  
18 together.

19           I -- this is -- you've heard in baseball a  
20 day-night doubleheader, a night doubleheader. This is  
21 a West Virginia/Delaware doubleheader. And the day  
22 game is right now here in West Virginia and the night  
23 game -- actually, it will be in the daytime, but tomorrow  
24 will be in Dover, Delaware, Capitol, and we'll have the  
25 opportunity to hear from folks in the greater Delaware

1 area about wastewater infrastructure, and we're going to  
2 start off right here.

3           Just a personal note. My -- my parents were  
4 born in Beckley, actually, Eccles. My great-, great-,  
5 great-, great-, great-, great-grandfather, I think, was  
6 one of the cofounders of Raleigh County. And there's a  
7 cemetery not too far from Beckley called Mount Tabor,  
8 Mount Tabor Baptist Church, where my mom and grandparents  
9 were buried. And so we went out there earlier today. So  
10 this is just very special, very special to me, so thank  
11 you.

12           My parents -- my grandparents were hugely,  
13 really very spiritual people. My mother was a very  
14 spiritual person. She used to drag us to a little Bible  
15 church right in front of -- about a hundred yards from  
16 Shady Spring High School, when my sister and I were born  
17 and we were little kids. And one of the things that my  
18 mom was big on was Matthew 25.

19           what does Matthew 25 say? When I was hungry,  
20 did you feed me? When I was naked, did you clothe me?  
21 when I was thirsty, did you give me to drink? Did you  
22 give me to drink? It's right there in the first Gospel  
23 in the New Testament.

24           And if you look at the Declaration of  
25 Independence, it's right there, too. And it says a

1 little bit different, but life, liberty and the pursuit  
2 of happiness, the words of Thomas Jefferson. Pretty  
3 hard to have life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness  
4 if you don't have clean water to drink. It's actually  
5 where life begins. So this is I think a -- there is a  
6 moral imperative involved here. There's an imperative  
7 that's really consistent with our Constitution of our  
8 country and with our Declaration of Independence.

9           And we're thrilled. I'm thrilled to be here  
10 with Shelley and Joe and our witnesses and all of you. I  
11 have about a forty-minute statement I want to give. Not  
12 really. It may seem that long, but it will not be that  
13 long.

14           I will say this. Yesterday when Joe was --  
15 where's John? John Kane is right here. John and I flew  
16 in from Philly and landed in Charleston, and we met up  
17 with my first cousin, Bob Collier, who is associate  
18 bursar at Marshall. And we had dinner together. But  
19 he told me, he said when we're walking around the  
20 Capitol -- and what a beautiful Capitol. I don't know if  
21 you've been to your Capitol lately. My wife and I have  
22 been visiting this summer a lot of state capitols on a  
23 road trip, and but you have the most beautiful Capitol.  
24 God, is it a beautiful Capitol.

25           And there is a monument there -- Joe, as I'm

1 sure you know, there's a monument there that honors those  
2 who gave their lives in world war I, world war II, the  
3 Vietnam War, where I served, Korean War, other wars. And  
4 my -- while we were waiting for my cousin to arrive from  
5 Huntington to have dinner with us -- what was the name of  
6 that restaurant? Do you know the name of that restaurant  
7 in Charleston?

8 *SENATOR MANCHIN:* Chop House?

9 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Ten Ten?

10 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* Ten Ten. Yeah, a place  
11 called Ten Ten.

12 Anyway, while we were waiting for him, he said  
13 walk around and find this monument. And we did. And,  
14 you know, world war I, world war II, Korean and  
15 everything. He said look -- get in there and look at  
16 the world war II section. And he said look about 8 feet  
17 high and then follow the alphabetical and find Patton.  
18 And sure enough, there it was, Robert Kidd Patton, who  
19 was my uncle, who died in a kamikaze attack in world  
20 war II. And he's buried -- he's not buried anywhere  
21 because he was lost at sea, but there is a tombstone in  
22 his honor at Mount Tabor.

23 So that's probably more than you wanted to  
24 know, but people say why would I want to come to West  
25 Virginia? That's why. That's why. Thrilled to be here.

1 well, good morning again, everybody. My thanks  
2 to Shelley and to Joe. Shelley does a terrific job on  
3 our committee and I want to mention this later. Joe  
4 Biden asked us, Shelley and myself, two other -- a  
5 Democrat and a Republican, literally two or three days  
6 after he was sworn in, he said, "We need for your  
7 committee to lead the way on infrastructure, roads,  
8 highways, bridges, drinking water, wastewater,  
9 sanitation. We need for you guys to set an example for  
10 the rest of the Senate."

11 And about two months later we reported  
12 unanimously out of our committee, unanimously, water --  
13 cleaner drinking water legislation, wastewater  
14 sanitation, service transportation, roads, highways,  
15 bridges, climate. Unanimously, I think by the end of  
16 March. And later on that water bill passed by 89-to-2  
17 in the Senate.

18 Joe knows, we don't pass a lot of bills by  
19 89-to-2 in the United States Senate, but we sure did in  
20 this case.

21 So this is the stuff that we worked on. And  
22 later on Shelley led the effort, Joe led the effort, to  
23 try to find common ground on infrastructure, and our  
24 legislation out of our committee became the foundation on  
25 which the infrastructure package that's in the House,

1 awaiting adoption, I hope. And so we have been heavily  
2 involved in this stuff for the better part of this year,  
3 and before that in previous Congresses.

4 Today we're joined by an excellent panel of  
5 witnesses. Mr. Roberts, Jason; right? Is it Jason?

6 **MR. ROBERTS:** Correct.

7 **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Jason, I see. Where are you  
8 from?

9 **MR. ROBERTS:** Mercer County, sir.

10 **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Mercer County.

11 **MR. ROBERTS:** Right outside of Princeton.

12 **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Very good. Nice to see you.  
13 Mr. Morgan, Wayne Morgan. Where are you from,  
14 Wayne?

15 **MR. MORGAN:** I was born in Fairmont and now  
16 live in Charleston.

17 **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Do you know anybody else who  
18 is from Fairmont who turned out okay?

19 I think you do.

20 And Alan -- I was a freshman congressman with  
21 a bunch of guys from here in west Virginia. One of them  
22 was Congressman Alan -- I can't -- his last name --

23 **SENATOR CAPITO:** Mollohan.

24 **SENATOR MANCHIN:** Mollohan.

25 **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Alan Mollohan. I think



1 Alan was from Fairmont.

2 *SENATOR MANCHIN:* Fairmont.

3 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* There you go.

4 And Mr. Grinstead. Mr. Grinstead, is it Todd?

5 *MR. GRINSTEAD:* Yes.

6 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* Hey, Todd. Where are you  
7 from, Todd?

8 *MR. GRINSTEAD:* Mason County.

9 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* Mason County. Well, that's  
10 great. You're great to come today.

11 Thank you all for being here to discuss the  
12 challenges that are facing our country and our state,  
13 this state and my state, and we thank the witnesses  
14 especially for being here to discuss those challenges  
15 facing wastewater infrastructure, particularly those  
16 that are not in urban areas or areas that have plenty of  
17 money, but small areas, rural areas, disadvantaged areas  
18 and disadvantaged communities where it's consistent with  
19 Matthew 25, where you find the least of these who needs  
20 all kinds of help. And one of those ways they need help  
21 is having clean water to drink.

22 But again, it's great to be back in Beckley.  
23 And my sister and I used to -- we lived up for a while in  
24 Beaver, right on Beaver Creek. And I don't know if you  
25 guys ever lived close to a creek. Anybody here live

1 close to a creek or river? We also lived by the New  
2 River, too. We used to go and play down by Beaver Creek  
3 every day. Every day. And we'd fish there. We'd try to  
4 catch frogs and stuff there. My parents would never let  
5 us eat the fish. We would never eat the fish. The  
6 reason why is because it wasn't safe to do that. And  
7 some of the nearby septic tanks that residents relied  
8 upon were not well maintained, and as a result, we had  
9 raw sewage and other pollution slipping into the Beaver  
10 Creek and making it really poison.

11 A lot has changed since then. A lot has  
12 changed since then. Congress passed the Clean Water Act  
13 and the Safe Drinking Water Act decades ago, and then  
14 the nearly fifty years since then we've made significant  
15 progress in cleaning up our nation's waterways and  
16 improving our treatment systems to prevent wastewater  
17 from ending up in our rivers and our streams.

18 Despite this progress, far too many  
19 communities around our country continue to struggle.  
20 They struggle with outdated wastewater systems. They  
21 struggle with 20th century infrastructure that can't  
22 keep up with 21st century threats like climate-related  
23 extreme weather, incredible floods, incredible winds,  
24 droughts, you name it.

25 These challenges are well documented and every

1 four years these -- an outfit called the American  
2 Society of Civil Engineers, they put out a report card.  
3 Just think about the end of school. They put out a  
4 report card every year. And they're assessing the  
5 infrastructure, what kind of job we're doing with  
6 respect to our infrastructure.

7 I'd like to say the grades are getting better.  
8 They're not. In fact, the grades have not been great  
9 lately. The 2021 report this year, report card, said our  
10 wastewater treatment facilities received a grade of  
11 D-plus. D-plus as a nation underscoring -- if I brought  
12 a D-plus back home on my grade card when I was a little  
13 kid in grade school here, I would have been -- I would  
14 have been hiding under a bed before showing that to my  
15 dad. But we are receiving a grade of D-plus as a nation,  
16 underscoring a need to upgrade these services across our  
17 country, and particularly in states like West Virginia  
18 and states like Delaware.

19 I don't think any of us take much pride in  
20 that grade, and we can do better. And we've got to do  
21 better. I like to say everything I do, I can do better.  
22 We can do better at this as well. We need to.

23 But every household, be it a family in  
24 Appalachia, one in rural Georgia, should have the peace  
25 of mind that when they flush the toilet their waste

1 won't end up polluting the community in which they call  
2 home. Yet far too many towns and municipalities  
3 struggle to attain the resources and capital needed to  
4 modernize the wastewater system. We must find a better  
5 way, and that's where Congress comes into the equation.

6 I talk to Joe and, excuse me, Senator Capito  
7 and Senator Manchin, who've heard me talk a lot about  
8 shared responsibilities and joining our former  
9 governors -- and states have responsibilities for this.  
10 Counties have responsibilities. The private sector  
11 has responsibilities. We as taxpayers have a  
12 responsibility, and the federal government has a  
13 responsibility. We want to make sure all of us,  
14 including the federal government, are meeting their  
15 responsibilities.

16 But earlier this year, Senator Capito and I  
17 got to work, as I said earlier, drafting the Drinking  
18 Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act. Now, that's  
19 the name. And after leading Senate passage of the bill,  
20 this bill we passed unanimously out of committee -- out  
21 of the Senate Committee on Water and Infrastructure, we  
22 passed it by an 89-to-2 vote, and it became the  
23 foundational piece, as I said earlier, this bipartisan  
24 infrastructure bill, that Senator Capito and  
25 Senator Manchin helped to lead.

1           Now we're working with our colleagues over in  
2 the House. We passed the bill by a huge margin. Mitch  
3 McConnell voted for it. A bunch of Republicans joined  
4 us and we passed it by a big margin. We're working with  
5 our House colleagues to send this massive bipartisan  
6 compromise to the President's desk.

7           There is a whole lot more than just drinking  
8 water, wastewater and water sanitation. There's a lot  
9 more than roads, highways, bridges, climate. It does a  
10 lot more than that, our ports, our railroads, and  
11 broadband, which we need infrastructure hugely here and  
12 in my state as well. It does a whole lot. And we  
13 desperately need for the House to pass that bill and  
14 send it on to the President and get it signed and  
15 getting our economy up into high gear.

16           But our bipartisan bill invests more than  
17 \$35 billion in water resource development projects  
18 across the country, \$35 billion across the country.

19           Say compared to what? Well, compared to a  
20 whole lot less. It's a very, very significant increase.  
21 And a lot of it's coming directly to communities in  
22 which the need is the greatest. To put it simply, our  
23 bill -- our bill is good for this country. It's  
24 especially good for west Virginia. It's especially good  
25 for west Virginia.

1           And here's how:

2           First, our bill provides something like almost  
3 \$15 billion for something called the Clean Water State  
4 Revolving Loan Fund, for every state has a clean -- it  
5 has two revolving loan funds. One of them is for clean  
6 drinking water, the other is for just essentially  
7 wastewater. And it's a revolving loan fund that the  
8 federal government feeds into to maintain. States feed  
9 into it. And jurisdictions can borrow money out of  
10 either revolving loan funds. They got to pay it back.  
11 They got to pay it back. That's the catch. They got to  
12 pay it back with interest.

13           But the revolving loan funds will help West  
14 Virginia finance a variety of community and statewide  
15 water infrastructure projects.

16           Next, our legislation will also improve  
17 sanitation in rural areas. It provides something like  
18 \$780 million, it's about three-quarters of a billion  
19 dollars, for connecting low-income households to  
20 wastewater services and provides up to a third of a  
21 billion dollars for sewer overflow and sewer and water  
22 reuse programs in rural and financially distressed  
23 communities.

24           Finally, our bill includes \$125 million for  
25 water infrastructure resiliency programs in underserved

1 communities that most of our vulnerable population can  
2 adapt to and prepare for the impacts of growing threats  
3 like extreme weather.

4           This legislation has earned praise across the  
5 political spectrum and from industry leaders as well.  
6 And why is that? It's because investing in water  
7 infrastructure not only pays for itself, it also fosters  
8 economic growth. And as recovering governors and as a  
9 United States senator who helps lead this committee, we  
10 know governors don't create jobs; senators don't create  
11 jobs; presidents don't create jobs. We help create a  
12 nurturing environment for job creation.

13           And as a guy who spent half my life on  
14 economic development and job creation in Delaware, I can  
15 assure you, businesses don't want to be in a state where  
16 the water systems are bad, where the water is unsafe.  
17 They just don't want to be there. They'll find another  
18 place. And that's why this legislation is especially  
19 important for states like West Virginia. It's really  
20 struggling to get it to regain its footing on economic  
21 development.

22           So how's this for the deal: The Commerce  
23 Department says that every dollar spent on water and  
24 wastewater services leads to about \$2.60 in revenue for  
25 the rest of our economy. Let me say that again. For

1 every dollar we spend on water and wastewater services,  
2 we get a payback of almost \$3 in revenue for the rest of  
3 our economy. And adding one job in water and wastewater  
4 industry creates nearly four additional jobs for the  
5 economy overall.

6           So we have an opportunity to invest in  
7 cleaner, safer water for our communities and get our  
8 economy moving at the same time. And in my book, that's  
9 a win-win, maybe a win-win-win situation.

10           Let me close by saying this: Clean water is  
11 an essential part of our healthy lives, healthy  
12 economies, and a healthy environment. Again I say --  
13 I'll reiterate for you, we have a moral responsibility  
14 here, a moral responsibility to ensure that our water is  
15 clean and safe to drink for everybody. And we can do so  
16 in a way that empowers our economy and creates  
17 good-paying American jobs.

18           I look forward to getting -- working with  
19 Senator Capito and Senator Manchin, our colleagues in the  
20 House and Senate, Democrats and Republicans, and the  
21 President. And the President gets the goal across the  
22 finish line in helping communities from Beckley, West  
23 Virginia, and Ellendale, Delaware, which would remind a  
24 lot of you of the towns and communities in West Virginia.

25           with that, I want to turn to our committee's



1 ranking member, Senator Capito, for her opening remarks  
2 and introduction of today's witnesses. I could not have  
3 a better partner in the United States Senate to serve on  
4 this committee with, somebody who is just interested in  
5 getting things done, looking out for people, doing the  
6 right thing. And she has wonderful staff as well. None  
7 of them are here today.

8           No, they're here. I'm going to ask Shelley's  
9 staff to raise your hands, please. And our staff as  
10 well on my team. John. Okay. And they work together.  
11 If we're in a room together -- Shelley and I meet every  
12 Thursday and just talk things over. If we're not  
13 together, then we're on the phone. And if you walk  
14 through that room, that meeting, if you didn't know  
15 whose side was on whose side, you wouldn't know. It's  
16 just that kind of collaboration, which I think is what  
17 the American people want.

18           I'm thrilled to be here. Thank you, Shelley.  
19 This is your show --

20           **SENATOR CAPITO:** Thank you.

21           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** -- so thanks for inviting me  
22 to come.

23           **SENATOR CAPITO:** well, it's a real honor for  
24 me to be here with my chairman, Senator Tom Carper of  
25 Delaware, and also to be with my fellow senator from

1 West Virginia, Senator Joe Manchin. I think the fact  
2 that Senator Manchin joined us as a partner here today  
3 shows not just how well Senator Manchin and I work  
4 together as representing West Virginia in terms of that,  
5 but how our two committees -- Senator Manchin is the  
6 Chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.  
7 Senator Carper and I are over on EPW, and there's a lot  
8 of crossover between different areas and different areas  
9 of interest, so I thank -- I thank him for coming today.

10           So welcome home to Senator Carper. I think  
11 that -- I think that you can tell that the good, solid  
12 upbringing that Raleigh County brought to Senator Carper  
13 still holds dear to his heart, and also the values that  
14 he embraces. I think probably his entire life were  
15 rooted here among the great folks of West Virginia. So  
16 we're very proud of that.

17           And we do know that Carper is a good West  
18 Virginia name as well, so I'm sure he has more relatives  
19 around here than he really knows about.

20           I also want to thank Judge Poling for arranging  
21 for us to use his courtroom today, and all the people  
22 that work for him. I want to thank the sheriff and the  
23 deputies for providing the securities that we need and  
24 that we've asked for, so I appreciate that.

25           I want to thank my staff and also Senator

1 Carper's staff, and I want to thank the press for coming  
2 and covering this. I think it's important for our  
3 state, and we have some good witnesses here today.

4 I'm not going to go back through a lot of what  
5 Senator Carper said about specifics of the bill that we  
6 passed, but I do have an opening statement, and I want to  
7 also again talk about where my area of interest has been  
8 is when you're looking at small and disadvantaged and  
9 rural communities, when you're trying to look at funding  
10 mechanisms and the ways to deliver something that we all  
11 take for granted in some sources, but some people wake up  
12 in the morning and can't, and that's safe and clean  
13 drinking water.

14 So, we did pass that legislation. We voted it  
15 off the floor 89-to-2. He remarked that it's rare that  
16 we send anything out 89-to-2, and that is very, very  
17 very true.

18 One of the questions I get all the time is,  
19 "Do you-all ever do anything together?" And the sad  
20 note about that is we do a lot together, but it doesn't  
21 get the kind of, I guess, publicity or good -- good  
22 feeling -- we don't get -- we don't talk enough about  
23 the things that we do. We talk too much about the  
24 things that we don't agree on than more about the things  
25 that we do agree on. And in this area, where we're

1 Looking at water infrastructure or roads and bridges and  
2 broadband, we have great consensus.

3           So we're waiting with bated breath, the three  
4 of us, for the House to pass the bipartisan  
5 infrastructure package of which this water bill is fully  
6 a part of this, but also a lot of other really good  
7 things that will be great, not just for West Virginia,  
8 but for Delaware.

9           And I would say that I think one of the  
10 reasons that Senator Carper and I get along as well as  
11 we do, and we do, and I think a lot of it is because of  
12 his efforts to include me in all the decision making,  
13 and our staffs work very well together, is the fact that  
14 we're from small states. And he knows that we know each  
15 other. And he knows that we have -- and in the course  
16 of our businesses, or doing our business, we run into  
17 each other in all kinds of different ways, and sometimes  
18 that's in personal ways.

19           I would make note that I am the only person on  
20 the dais here that has not been the governor of a state,  
21 so bear with me here. These governors can be pretty  
22 tough guys, I can tell you that. They're used to getting  
23 things done, that's for sure.

24           So there are many critical water  
25 infrastructure needs that the Environment and Public

1 works Committee have heard about, and we need to address  
2 these right now.

3 I look forward to hearing the perspectives  
4 from our witnesses and I thank them for coming. I know  
5 that we had originally had another date planned and they  
6 reworked into their schedules for them to attend with us  
7 today.

8 But every day Americans rely on the  
9 infrastructure that supports our wastewater systems.  
10 They are systems that this nation prides itself on. When  
11 I was reading Mr. Morgan's statements, I was actually  
12 educated to the fact that many of these systems were  
13 built in the '70s to last for 50 years. Well, we're  
14 right there. And, you know, I think some of these  
15 systems were built probably in the '10s and '20s, and so  
16 they're edging onto 80, 90, 100 years.

17 we are facing critical challenges in the  
18 resiliency of these systems, with many small and rural  
19 counties being disproportionately affected by the wide  
20 array of water infrastructure challenges. Small and  
21 rural communities are particularly strained and need  
22 additional support to ensure protection and availability  
23 of this resource.

24 As I said, many of our systems are very old,  
25 and some of our systems don't even know where their

1 piping is. We did address that in our water bill,  
2 because the Macon records really were created post the  
3 delivery of the infrastructure systems.

4           These are not unique to West Virginia or  
5 Delaware. They're all over the country. So I'm  
6 committed to addressing these challenges by facing our  
7 infrastructure problems in the water area expeditiously  
8 and bipartisan with a holistic approach.

9           We need a reliable, modern water  
10 infrastructure. It's a fundamental responsibility of  
11 our government, and that's why the Drinking Water and  
12 Wastewater Infrastructure package that -- I'll call it  
13 DWWIA for short -- provides some of this. It ranges  
14 solutions to ensuring that systems have pipes that don't  
15 leak. There have been article after article in West  
16 Virginia about the loss of water in our pipes. When we  
17 look at, you know, losing 50 percent of the water after  
18 it's been treated going out to different homes and  
19 businesses, and then you look at our friends in  
20 California who have huge water shortages, you know, we  
21 can't -- water is that precious resource that we need to  
22 really make sure that we take care of.

23           But we also ensure that there is sustainable  
24 water workforce in place, and I'm sure we'll address  
25 this, to maintain and operate these systems and to

1 ensure that there is tailored funding for the resilience  
2 and sustainability for small and rural systems.

3           So we provided a robust bipartisan solution in  
4 DWWIA and we'll hopefully, as it's included in the larger  
5 bipartisan infrastructure package entirely and  
6 verbatim -- they didn't change anything, which is rare --  
7 we are hopeful that our colleagues will all address this  
8 in the House and we can get it to the President's desk.

9           So again, I'm very pleased that you are here,  
10 honored that you are here, and happy that you've had a  
11 great experience as we move into -- as you've had your  
12 visit and your coming home visit, your homecoming.

13           So do you want me to introduce the witnesses  
14 and then we'll go on?

15           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Would you, please.

16           **SENATOR CAPITO:** I will.

17           Our first witness, starting left to right, is  
18 Todd Grinstead. Todd is the Executive Director of the  
19 West Virginia Water -- Rural Water Association. He has  
20 a career 40 years in the public water and wastewater  
21 industry. He served on the Board of the West Virginia  
22 Rural Water Association in various positions.

23           welcome, Todd. We're happy to have you here.

24           **MR. GRINSTEAD:** Thank you.

25           **SENATOR CAPITO:** Our second witness is Wayne

1 Morgan. Wayne graduated from West Virginia University.  
2 He has a Bachelor's in Civil Engineering and a Master's  
3 in Business Administration. He was at American Water  
4 systems for 25 years. I guess 11 of those in West  
5 Virginia; is that correct?

6 *MR. MORGAN:* Correct.

7 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Because it says 14 in New  
8 Jersey.

9 And he was in charge of my water and Joe's  
10 water, so we're grateful to you, Wayne, for that.

11 He has a certified drinking water operator's  
12 license. And welcome to you, and I'm glad that you're  
13 here today.

14 He is the Executive Director of the West  
15 Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council.

16 Our final witness today there is Jason Roberts.  
17 He's the Executive Director of the Region 1 Planning and  
18 Development Council. Jason graduated from Concord and  
19 has a degree in geography.

20 Gosh, I don't even know if I've met somebody  
21 who has a degree in geography.

22 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* Not just one, two.

23 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Oh, two. Yeah. Oh, he's got  
24 a master's. Now I know I've never met somebody who has  
25 a master's in geography.



1           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** He's probably doubling down.

2           **SENATOR CAPITO:** Doubling down.

3           Jason and I have worked a lot on the broadband  
4 issue with my office. He's been a real innovator, I  
5 think, in his area to try to recreate jobs in an  
6 economic development system in southern west Virginia,  
7 which has had particular challenges over the last  
8 several years.

9           So welcome, Jason.

10          I'm glad that you all are here, and I'll turn  
11 it back to the Chair.

12          **MR. ROBERTS:** Thank you.

13          **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Thanks for the  
14 introductions. Thanks even more for pulling this panel  
15 together. This is a great panel, and we're looking  
16 forward to what they have to share with us and maybe  
17 answer a question or two.

18          Let me yield to Senator Manchin for a couple  
19 comments and then we'll turn it over to our witnesses.

20          Joe.

21          **SENATOR MANCHIN:** well, first of all, thank  
22 you. Thank you, Senator Carper, and thank you, Senator  
23 Capito, for allowing me to be here today to observe and  
24 work with you-all. Our committees do have an awful lot  
25 of overlap with energy, natural resources, and also with

1 EPW, and we work very closely together.

2 Tom always told me -- I get to tell you about  
3 Tom. Before I knew Tom, I was governor. And governors  
4 have kind of a bond. And Shelley has not been removed  
5 from the governorship. Her father was governor three  
6 times.

7 *SENATOR CAPITO:* So I know what they're like.  
8 I know what they're like.

9 *SENATOR MANCHIN:* She knows how difficult we  
10 can be.

11 Anyway, with that, when I first met Tom he  
12 said, "Question for you. Quiz. Name the only senator  
13 sitting in the Senate today that was born in west  
14 Virginia."

15 well, by that time, we had Senator Byrd and  
16 Senator Rockefeller, and I knew neither one of them was  
17 born in West Virginia. I said, "I'm not sure."

18 He says, "I am. I'm the only one that was  
19 born and representing West Virginia that was born in  
20 West Virginia."

21 So we have three of us here on the most  
22 important committees for West Virginia and that speaks  
23 volumes, I think, for our state. We do work well  
24 together. Contrary to what you hear and what you read  
25 in the paper and what you see on TV, everything is so

1 toxic and disjointed. It's not. The hardest thing we  
2 have is the leadership working together. We're fine.  
3 Sometimes the leadership has a different agenda than  
4 what we have, which is basically to represent the people  
5 that we do.

6           when we look at West Virginia, we have been  
7 identified as \$1.5 billion of need in water and  
8 wastewater, \$1.5 billion. That's a tremendous amount.  
9 And I always wondered, how did that go so unattended.  
10 And I think it's basically we take that for granted. We  
11 assume that everyone should have clean drinking water  
12 and everyone should have basically potable water to  
13 where you can dispose of your waste and do it sanitary.  
14 But it's not the case.

15           So there was \$678 million in the American  
16 Rescue Plan that came directly to the cities and  
17 counties, and hopefully the three categories was water,  
18 sewer, and internet. And I'm anxious to hear about how  
19 that's going toward working with the State of West  
20 Virginia on the \$1.5 billion.

21           In the infrastructure bill, which we all  
22 worked on very, very closely to get the bipartisan  
23 infrastructure bill passed with 69 votes, there was  
24 \$5.75 billion that will directly benefit and affect the  
25 State of West Virginia, 5.75 on top of what we already

1 have. Now, if we can't fix internet and if we can't fix  
2 water and sewer, God help us.

3           So we've got a golden opportunity if we can  
4 just get this bill sitting over in the House passed.  
5 Tom has been pushing it and those two have worked great.  
6 They pushed out some pieces of legislation. We used  
7 that as the model for the bipartisan bill, passed it,  
8 and now we've got something ready to go that all the  
9 country is going to benefit by.

10           So I'm anxious to hear today how we can all  
11 work together even further and what we can do to assist  
12 you-all, so I'm here to back them up and help them any  
13 way I can.

14           Thank you, Senators.

15           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Thank you so much. Thanks  
16 for those comments, and with that --

17           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** And I will say this: My  
18 wife is from Beckley, so I spent a lot of time in  
19 Beckley. And Gayle couldn't be here today. She wanted  
20 me to tell you, Tom and Shelley, that she is on the path  
21 on the ARC, Appalachian Regional Commission, and that's  
22 another focus for West Virginia.

23           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** It turned out Gayle -- it's  
24 a small world. Delaware is a small world. There you  
25 go. Gayle graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School.

1 Dan Patton, my first cousin, graduated from Woodrow  
2 Wilson High School, Patton's Market on Harper Road. And  
3 they were in the same graduating class. It's just  
4 amazing to me.

5 All right. who should we go with first?

6 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Start with Todd.

7 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* Todd. Todd, you're on, my  
8 friend. You've got two hours.

9 *MR. GRINSTEAD:* I need a little more than  
10 that, but all right.

11 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* That's enough in the  
12 Senate -- that's enough to clear our throats.

13 *MR. GRINSTEAD:* Good morning, Senator Capito,  
14 Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, and Senator  
15 Manchin. It's an honor to appear before you today and  
16 have the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public  
17 works to hold its field hearing here in Beckley to talk  
18 about West Virginia and national water issues.

19 I'm Todd Grinstead, the Executive Director of  
20 the West Virginia Rural Water Association, where I have  
21 worked for the past two years. I formerly worked for  
22 the Claywood Park Public Service District for 23 years  
23 in western West Virginia, outside of Parkersburg.

24 Our member communities have a very important  
25 public responsibility of complying with all applicable

1 regulations and supplying the public with safe water and  
2 sanitation.

3           The Environment and Public Works Committee is  
4 very important to rural and small town America. We are  
5 grateful for the numerous ways the Committee has  
6 included rural America in crafting federal water and  
7 environment policy. Over the last 50 years, this  
8 country has made great advances in the standards of  
9 living in rural America and rural West Virginia.  
10 Millions of rural Americans now have access to public --  
11 safe public drinking water that their parents did not  
12 have.

13           A crucial part of our mission as the Rural  
14 Water Association is to travel directly to all small,  
15 rural communities and assist them with operating,  
16 governing, financing, upgrading, and maintaining their  
17 water and wastewater infrastructure.

18           West Virginia has 835 public water systems,  
19 which 431 are community water systems. I have included  
20 an entire database of West Virginia public water systems  
21 in my written statement.

22           On behalf of all small, rural communities in  
23 all the states, thank you, Senators Capito and Carper,  
24 for crafting and passing the Drinking Water and  
25 Wastewater Infrastructure Act. We are counting on

1 Congress to pass this bill later this year and see it  
2 signed into law by the President.

3           We are grateful for your legislation that  
4 includes numerous beneficial provisions, such as the  
5 expansion of technical assistance, subsidized funding  
6 initiatives within the State Revolving Funds targeted  
7 the communities with the greatest need.

8           We also appreciate your legislation does not  
9 include federal unfunded mandates on local governments.

10           Moreover, we are grateful for your attention  
11 to enhancing the technical assistance authorizations  
12 under the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water  
13 Act.

14           In addition to funding assistance through the  
15 State Revolving Funds, small rural communities need help  
16 with technical assistance and training with funding  
17 applications, understanding all the complicated EPA  
18 rules, including the new lead and copper rule, and  
19 training of new operators.

20           Small rural communities have relied on local  
21 on-site technical assistance and training to comply with  
22 the myriad of federal EPA regulations. The EPA needs to  
23 recognize that small local water supplies are operated  
24 and governed by people whose family drink the water  
25 every day and are locally serving their communities.

1           The most successful approach to technical  
2 assistance is the circuit runner concept created by  
3 Congress, which provides an expert experienced in water  
4 utility operations and compliance. This expert can  
5 travel directly to small rural communities as needed to  
6 assist the rule compliance and operational issues.

7           Circuit riders work free of charge to small  
8 communities, which offer savings in community of  
9 thousands of dollars by aborting consulting fees.

10           Small municipalities in west Virginia would  
11 like to sincerely thank Congress for the funding  
12 received for the over \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 stimulus  
13 package, otherwise known as the American Rescue Plan  
14 Act.

15           A large concern of many of West Virginia's  
16 small and disadvantaged communities are aging water  
17 infrastructure, future EPA compliance, and the need to  
18 expand our existing water utilities to serve and  
19 maintain West Virginians who still don't have adequate  
20 water or sewer service.

21           We still have more ridges and hollers that  
22 need water. It's a sad reality that, in 2021, there are  
23 rural communities and families that still do not have  
24 access to safe, clean drinking water or proper  
25 sanitation, due to the lack of population density or



1 funding.

2 we're very thankful for the \$55 billion in  
3 water funding in the bipartisan infrastructure framework  
4 legislation, which is more EPA water infrastructure  
5 funding than anyone could ever imagine. We are  
6 committed to working with the state agencies and moving  
7 the funding out to the necessary projects and helping  
8 the communities in west Virginia apply for secure  
9 funding.

10 Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the  
11 Committee, for the honor of testifying on behalf of  
12 rural America, and we are grateful that you have  
13 included us as a voice in rural interests in the  
14 hearing today.

15 In addition, we deeply appreciate the numerous  
16 opportunities this committee has provided rural America  
17 in crafting federal water and environment legislation.

18 **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Todd, thank you for those  
19 comments and for joining us today.

20 Senator Capito, thank you and your staff for  
21 finding him and dragging him in here to be a witness for  
22 us.

23 wayne, you're next, please.

24 **MR. MORGAN:** Good morning, Chairman Carper,  
25 Ranking Member Capito, Senator Manchin. Thank you for

1 this opportunity to discuss our nation's water and  
2 wastewater utilities.

3           Senator Capito, you did a great job of giving  
4 my background so I'm not going to go back through that,  
5 but I will mention the West Virginia Infrastructure and  
6 Job Development Council was created in 1994 as a  
7 clearinghouse for the funding programs that provide  
8 water and wastewater service throughout the state of  
9 West Virginia. We also make up the 20 percent match  
10 through our state funding that allows us to utilize the  
11 SRF funding that makes up so many projects. We work  
12 with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S.  
13 Environmental Development Association; ARC contributes  
14 heavily to a lot of our projects. The State has the  
15 Community Development Block Program, and then, like I  
16 said, whether it's the drinking water or the Clean Water  
17 Safe Drinking Water Act, those are the backbone of  
18 trying to get water and sewer throughout the state of  
19 West Virginia, whether it's for repairs, replacement or  
20 just extending service.

21           I will mention, Chairman Carper, that West  
22 Virginia did complete its ASCE score card recently.

23           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** And, and?

24           **MR. MORGAN:** We were not last, which we're  
25 very proud of. We did get that done, and it actually

1 was a course at Fairmont State University, so I got to  
2 work with the drinking water group in putting together  
3 that score card, and I think it's full of valuable  
4 information.

5 I'm going to hit on four topics or challenges  
6 that we face here in West Virginia. Aging infrastructure  
7 isn't new. It's something that we're dealing with  
8 throughout the United States. But maybe something that's  
9 a little special about West Virginia is the fact that  
10 probably 30 percent of our state or our constituents are  
11 unserved related to water, and maybe as high as  
12 40 percent unserved related to wastewater.

13 The Infrastructure Council prepares for the  
14 West Virginia State Legislature a Needs Assessment that  
15 I have in front of me. And that Needs Assessment  
16 documents the needs that we have. And I'll give some  
17 details on that as we go through that.

18 When I started my career at WVU, or started my  
19 education, the SRF funds provided 75 percent grant  
20 funding. I knew I wanted to be an engineer. I wasn't  
21 sure what field I was going to go into, but when I heard  
22 there was 75 percent grant funding for wastewater, that's  
23 where I went. And it's served me well over my 46 years  
24 working in this industry.

25 **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** How many years?

1           **THE WITNESS:** Forty-six.

2           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** All right. If you say so.  
3 I'll ask to see your driver's license later.

4           **MR. MORGAN:** Just like roads in the state of  
5 West Virginia, we've got mountainous terrain, and that  
6 costs more. We have an abundance of water, which is a  
7 great thing, a great selling point for the state of West  
8 Virginia, particularly when you spend some time at  
9 national conferences and look what Arizona and  
10 California are going through and what engineers are able  
11 to spend associated with getting water to those areas,  
12 so having an abundance of water is a great thing.

13           That's kind of a summary of infrastructure. I  
14 will mention that we have about \$400 million worth of  
15 applications associated with drinking water and about  
16 \$400 million applications associated with wastewater.  
17 So every month we meet and we try to figure out the best  
18 way to fund these, with the other funding programs. And  
19 hopefully, with the new bill that comes through, that  
20 will free up more money to move these things forward.

21           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** wait. wait. would you just  
22 repeat those numbers again, please?

23           **MR. MORGAN:** The state of West Virginia has  
24 about 400 million in drinking water and about  
25 400 million in wastewater in applications that are

1 pending. In other words, they're technically feasible,  
2 engineers have put together the applications, but they  
3 need funding to get them to construction. So, any type  
4 of additional funding will be very helpful in trying to  
5 make -- I won't call them shovel-ready but they're ready  
6 to start the design, and then they'll go on to  
7 construction, and they're needed to keep these systems  
8 functioning as we move forward.

9           And because we're concentrating on wastewater  
10 and combined sewer overflows, there's about a billion  
11 dollars' worth of needs associated with long-term  
12 control plans. Whether it's Huntington, or Charleston,  
13 or a small community, these combined sewers, dilution is  
14 the solution to pollution was an environmental engineer  
15 or sanitary engineer's term back in the '60s and '70s.  
16 I started school in the '70s. And, you know, putting in  
17 wastewater systems so the combined sewer systems can be  
18 converted to storm water systems is a big part of what  
19 we're trying to do to eliminate overflows that go into  
20 beautiful rivers and streams that we enjoy here in West  
21 Virginia.

22           Maybe even more important than the  
23 infrastructure itself is, even though they keep  
24 recycling, some of us, as we get older and we retire from  
25 one job and we start on a new job and we're working for

1 the State of West Virginia, and we love it, but we've got  
2 an aging workforce and we've got to address it. We've  
3 got to come up with more Class IV operators, whether it's  
4 drinking water or wastewater.

5           They've got to understand technology, because  
6 there's tremendous savings associated with technology,  
7 whether it's the mapping that Jason has done such a  
8 great job with -- Jason Roberts -- throughout the state  
9 of West Virginia, or supervisory control and data  
10 acquisition, or even just workforce management system,  
11 keeping track of your assets so that you can get those  
12 maintained and replaced.

13           If you paint a water storage tank every 25  
14 years, it will last over a hundred years. I've been  
15 part of an organization where we prided ourselves on  
16 receiving a 100-year certificate for a steel water  
17 storage tank as it was well maintained.

18           I've also seen other instances where, if you  
19 don't paint that tank, at the end of 25 or 30 years, you  
20 got to replace that tank because it wasn't painted or  
21 well maintained. So there's tremendous savings out  
22 there associated with that.

23           The last thing I'll mention is rate  
24 affordability. There's an apprehension of increasing  
25 rates. And we need to get to rates that are equitable

1 across the United States. I like the way the SRF  
2 programs work where they're based on a median household  
3 income, and if you have high rates, which exist in a lot  
4 of rural locations, then you can receive more grant funds  
5 associated with the SRF programs or with the state  
6 programs we have here in West Virginia, so that when  
7 people get to 2 percent, which is considered the  
8 affordability level for drinking water or wastewater, you  
9 can qualify for a lot more grants and get that project  
10 started.

11           If you have very low rates, then you probably  
12 need to take out a loan to get that work done and  
13 probably need to increase your rates to maintain that.

14           All these have potential solutions.  
15 Regionalization. Sometimes it's called consolidation.  
16 But we have a Consolidation Committee at the  
17 Infrastructure and Job Development Council. If it works  
18 better by combining a couple of small utilities and  
19 making them a larger utility, it has some great benefits.

20           Gradual increases in rates so that you don't  
21 create rate shock. You can't increase everybody all at  
22 one time, but this can be worked into a cost of service  
23 pricing so that we stabilize rates across the United  
24 States.

25           Lastly, I'd just like to thank you for the time

1 that I've been provided here and the ability to address  
2 some of these important issues, and I look forward to our  
3 discussion. Thank you.

4 **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Wayne, thank you. You've  
5 given us a lot to think about. Thank you very, very  
6 much for joining us.

7 Jason.

8 **MR. ROBERTS:** Senators, thank you all for the  
9 opportunity to speak today. We really appreciate this.  
10 And I will say I'm not the one that does the work at  
11 Region 1. I'm just blessed to have a bunch of  
12 colleagues that really carry the weight.

13 Senate Capito, before I start, I want to say  
14 you probably have met other people with a geography  
15 degree; they just didn't admit it to you.

16 **SENATOR CAPITO:** That's okay; I have a zoology  
17 degree so ...

18 **MR. ROBERTS:** Okay. But it's going to sound  
19 like I'm going to mirror what Mr. Morgan said, and some  
20 of this probably is, but to put things in perspective,  
21 in calendar year 2021 to date, the staff at Region 1 has  
22 submitted over 80 applications totaling over \$119  
23 million in need. Most of those are for water and sewer  
24 infrastructure projects.

25 So far this year, we have received more than



1 15 for our communities, but obviously, the need far  
2 outweighs how much has been awarded.

3           A lot of what I'm going to focus on was geared  
4 specifically towards sanitary sewer, but it's perfectly  
5 applicable to potable water as well. And seven  
6 challenges are what I want to hit on here, and I'm going  
7 to paraphrase in the interests of time. But you-all  
8 mentioned a lot of these infrastructure systems are  
9 designed for 40 or 50 years.

10           And, Senator Carper, I think you said some of  
11 these are more than 100 years old, and exactly they are.  
12 A lot of -- a lot of these old systems in some of these  
13 coal communities in our region, the water and sewer  
14 systems are 100 years old. It's a miracle that they're  
15 still working. But the aging infrastructure is a  
16 tremendous problem in rural systems.

17           A declining population and customer base,  
18 that's another big issue. As we all know, the cost of  
19 doing business, the cost of electricity, the cost of  
20 chemicals, of workforce, of labor, that continues to  
21 rise. But as you lose customers from a utility, that  
22 cost has to be spread across fewer and fewer people.  
23 So it's really you have less people bearing more of a  
24 burden. So that's a big issue, especially in rural  
25 Appalachia.

1           Topography is an issue for us, especially in  
2 southern west Virginia. When you go to bury a waterline  
3 or a sewer line, if you have to go very far and you hit  
4 much rock, it's -- the price goes way up. Luckily, I'm  
5 not an engineer; I don't have to deal with that.

6           But you never know what you're going to get  
7 into as we start developing projects and we start going  
8 to IJDC, or ARC, or U.S. EDA for money, a lot of the  
9 time the project goes up just for the unforeseen  
10 circumstances of the terrain.

11           To reiterate what Mr. Morgan said,  
12 artificially low rates are a big issue in a lot of these  
13 rural utilities. And I realize a lot of operators, a  
14 lot of systems, their management really try to keep  
15 rates low to really help their constituents and the  
16 customers. But, in reality, it's doing more harm than  
17 it is good. If you don't have the money you need to  
18 make the improvements, to make the repairs, to make the  
19 expansions, you can't do that.

20           And, unfortunately, what happens is  
21 maintenance is deferred, and then there's a catastrophic  
22 failure. And, really, it's kind of unfair to you-all  
23 because it puts you in the limelight and you have to  
24 come up with a quick fix, or we have to go to IJDC for a  
25 quick fix. So the artificially low rates are a big

1 issue.

2           Going back to my geography background, I  
3 started at Region 1 doing GIS work and mapping water and  
4 sewer systems. And that lack of -- that lack of  
5 knowledge, that lack of information is a big issue. You  
6 don't really know what you have in the ground. It's  
7 really hard to manage and maintain something if you  
8 don't know where it is or the condition. So the lack of  
9 system mapping is a tremendous issue for these small  
10 systems.

11           Lack of incoming workforce is a problem. One  
12 of the big issues that these smaller utilities will face  
13 is they will get someone who is just newly certified as  
14 an operator, and then once that operator gains some  
15 experience and gets more and more certifications, they  
16 move on to a more financially lucrative position at a  
17 larger utility.

18           And then overall, the last thing I want to  
19 point out as a challenge is just the general lack of  
20 technology. We have a lot of utilities that want to  
21 continue to do things the way they've always been done.  
22 And believe it or not, I am a, you know, computer person  
23 or a GIS person, but in a lot of ways, I'm afraid of  
24 technology as well.

25           And that's really harmful to a lot of our

1 municipal systems and our PSDs, our public service  
2 districts, because you could really increase a lot of  
3 operational efficiency if you integrate technology.

4           A good example is if we have to have a meeting  
5 with a project team for a water project or sewer  
6 project, if we utilize, you know, virtual meetings like  
7 Zoom, we can get on, have the meeting, and there's no  
8 travel time, there's no mileage cost, none of that.

9           But if the PSD or the municipality, if they  
10 mandate that the meeting is in person, then you have to  
11 pay the hourly rates and the mileage for people like  
12 accountants, engineers, project administrators, legal  
13 counsel. And that's a pretty expensive meeting. And so  
14 I think just the general adoption of technology will  
15 help these systems operate much more efficiently.

16           Some of the solutions that I'd like to point  
17 out, again, regionalization or consolidation, as  
18 Mr. Morgan put it. If you consolidate, obviously, you  
19 will realize the benefits of the economies of scale, so  
20 regionalization is, I think, a very good solution.

21           utilizing nontraditional systems, especially  
22 in sewer systems. Because of the low population base  
23 and a low customer count, it's not really efficient to  
24 have a traditional sewer plant or sewer system.

25 However, if you could have a series of decentralized

1 sewer systems, that means it's much more affordable and  
2 much more technically feasible.

3           And then if you have outmigration, you can  
4 simply walk away from that decentralized system or maybe  
5 even take it and relocate it somewhere else.

6           I think the single most important thing to  
7 take away is the frequent minor rate adjustments to keep  
8 track of inflation. Again, if you -- for example, I'll  
9 just give you some perfect examples. We have some  
10 utilities in my region that have not had a water or  
11 sewer increase in 30 years on their rates.

12           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Wow.

13           **MR. ROBERTS:** And so when they get to the  
14 point of having to go for a project, it necessitates a  
15 rate increase. Percentage wise, it's a massive  
16 increase. In terms of dollars, it's not much, but  
17 percentage wise, it's a massive increase. And you hear  
18 a lot of outcry from the people that are paying the  
19 bill.

20           It's just like any other utility, like the  
21 electric utility or maybe the gas utility. If you have  
22 periodic small, incremental rate adjustments, you don't  
23 get the sticker shock that Mr. Morgan mentioned.

24           Another possible solution would be some sort  
25 of either mandate or incentive or assistance for these

1 utilities to keep their audits current. In order to  
2 apply for most grant programs, you have to have a current  
3 audit. A lot of these smaller systems really can't  
4 just -- they can't afford the professional services to  
5 have yearly audits current. So aside from not being  
6 able to apply for grant funds, they really don't know the  
7 figures -- the dollar figures associated with the  
8 financial health of their system.

9           The possible solution is to require the  
10 implementation of current technologies, just in general,  
11 the technologies, and lastly, system mapping. Having  
12 adequate, current system mapping will really increase the  
13 operational efficiency of these utilities.

14           For example, you-all mentioned the water loss.  
15 In order to really track down and locate water loss, you  
16 have to know what's in the ground. And if you don't  
17 know exactly what's in the ground, you really can't  
18 locate it.

19           So those are some challenges and potential --  
20 potential solutions. And I do want to end this by  
21 saying I don't sound -- mean for this to sound as  
22 disparaging remarks to small utilities or small systems.  
23 In contrast, some of the most intelligent people I've  
24 ever met are the operators for small municipal systems  
25 or small PSD. And if it weren't for their ingenuity, a

1 lot of these systems would have went defunct years ago.

2           we have operators in our region that take  
3 equipment that is not meant to be serviceable, and they  
4 actually go to various locations, machine shops, and buy  
5 equipment from other suppliers and actually refurbish a  
6 lot of this equipment that was never designed to be  
7 refurbished. And if it wasn't for that, they would be  
8 in a world of hurt.

9           But, anyway, that's just the highlights of the  
10 challenges and the possible solutions. And again, thank  
11 you all so much for listening.

12           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Senator Capito, what a  
13 terrific panel. What a terrific panel. A lot of wisdom  
14 here and a lot of common sense. My dad used to say to  
15 my sister and me when we were kids and we would do some  
16 boneheaded stunt, Joe, my dad would say to my sister and  
17 me, "Just use some common sense." We must not have had  
18 much, because he said it a lot.

19           But a lot of wisdom here. A lot of common  
20 sense and a good healthy dose of technology.

21           All right. Senator Capito, do you want to  
22 lead us all?

23           **SENATOR CAPITO:** Yes. Thank you. And thank  
24 all the witnesses, and excellent.

25           I just wanted to start with a quick comment on

1 the wastewater -- drinking water wastewater bill we've  
2 been talking about and we hope gets signed into law when  
3 the President -- when the bigger bipartisan bill passes  
4 in the House. We're hopeful of that.

5           There's a couple of things that you've  
6 mentioned, and the reason we get these ideas is because  
7 you-all interact with us all the time to tell us where  
8 the needs are.

9           I've worked with Senator Booker on the  
10 workforce development piece. There is a \$5 million  
11 appropriation in there to help. Now, I don't know what  
12 the solutions are going to be in terms of getting young  
13 people excited about working in the water field, but I  
14 think we have to make sure that we're starting with  
15 that recruitment earlier and also providing the  
16 availabilities for that so that the certifications are  
17 there.

18           The other one is the decentralized systems.  
19 I'll have to say my staff here, Travis Cone, made a tour  
20 into southern West Virginia and it was -- highlighted a  
21 lot of abandoned systems that were old coal camps and  
22 other things that are just kind of left in the ground,  
23 and that can't be a good environmental situation. So  
24 we've tried to help address some of that through these  
25 either abandoned or decentralized systems.



1           And lastly, we also had tried to address the  
2 mapping issue in this bill. Realizing that people don't  
3 know where things are, as you mentioned, Jason, that we  
4 put some mapping dollars in there -- emphasis in there,  
5 availability to be able -- and, you know, with some of  
6 the technologies that's available now, it might be a  
7 little easier. But, in any event, you're right, you  
8 can't fix something if you don't know where it is.

9           I wanted to ask on the financing thing,  
10 because, obviously, the big thing is the money and being  
11 able to cobble money together. So I'll just call you  
12 "Wayne," because I know you, Wayne. Wayne, let me ask  
13 you this: On the -- when you're -- when you're putting  
14 together -- and I've seen how you do it in terms of the  
15 prioritization of certain projects. And you mentioned  
16 the \$400 million in drinking and \$400 million in  
17 wastewater projects that are pending in front of you.  
18 And are you finding that the matches that the locals are  
19 using, some of the rescue dollars or other dollars, for  
20 their match more readily?

21           How are these cobbling together? More  
22 difficult or easier than they have been, say over the  
23 last four to five years?

24           **MR. MORGAN:** Thank you for the question. And  
25 being a clearinghouse and getting to work with all the

1 funding programs, and I won't go through the litany  
2 again, but you're working with about ten different  
3 programs.

4           *SENATOR CAPITO:* Right.

5           *MR. MORGAN:* So, I was on a project phone call  
6 the other day for an \$11 million project, and we've got  
7 USDA on the phone; we've got the SRF program on the  
8 phone; we've got IJDC there, so we're putting it  
9 together a third, a third and a third.

10           Over the past six months, since the ARPA funds  
11 have become available to the local municipalities, the  
12 county commissions, our state funds are set up such that  
13 they require a 50 percent match from the Infrastructure  
14 Council funding. So many projects that were not viable  
15 before, I'll talk about -- although Parkersburg is a big  
16 utility and probably capable of going to the market,  
17 they do like to keep their rates as low as they can.  
18 But they came up with half-match with ARPA funds, and  
19 they put that together with the Drinking Water Treatment  
20 State Revolving Fund such that they were able, instead  
21 of borrowing for a \$15 million project, they're  
22 borrowing for \$7 million in loan and they're using their  
23 ARPA funds so that the constituents of Parkersburg keep  
24 their rates as low as possible.

25           And that rolls down to the smallest utility

1 that we work with, whether it's in McDowell County with  
2 Jason and his staff, or wherever it may be located.  
3 These ARPA funds are becoming more and more prevalent in  
4 providing funding for water and wastewater projects.

5           **SENATOR CAPITO:** Let me ask a quick question,  
6 because I heard this in Berkeley County, and that's our  
7 -- probably our -- one of our most growing counties, so  
8 they've got stresses and strains that are different in  
9 certain parts of the state. But there was a question  
10 raised as to whether they can go to the open market and  
11 get financing for the systems.

12           In a timing situation, is it quicker if you  
13 can go to the open market or -- and more favorable in  
14 the open market? What's the comparison on that?

15           **MR. MORGAN:** Thank you for the question. And  
16 John Reisenweber is our vice chair in the Infrastructure  
17 Council as a public member from Berkeley County. And  
18 essentially he made the Water Development Authority,  
19 Marie Prezioso, and myself as the Executive Director of  
20 the IJDC, aware that Berkeley County has got \$80 million  
21 worth of needs in water and wastewater.

22           **SENATOR CAPITO:** Right.

23           **MR. MORGAN:** That's a big number, but growth  
24 is just tremendous there with what's going on there  
25 compared to other parts of the state.

1           USDA announced their rates at our meeting.  
2 They're at 2 1/8 percent for somebody like Berkeley  
3 County PSD, who would only qualify for market rates  
4 because the median household income there is high, and  
5 we're at 2.75. So kind of like a water plant in  
6 Lewisburg, that's a \$30 million project, that a lot of  
7 funding programs have to come together to make the  
8 funding work for, our first thought about that when we  
9 were talking with Mr. Reisenweber, who represents the  
10 eastern panhandle on our Council, was it's not something  
11 IJDC can do, it's not something USDA can do, but the  
12 Water Development Authority might be able to go to the  
13 public market for them and finance the whole thing. And  
14 that way you're using the state audit or the state  
15 standing behind those numbers for Berkeley County. And  
16 it even becomes more important for small utilities to be  
17 able to use the state to be able to do that.

18           So we're going to figure out a way to get  
19 Berkeley County a large amount of money that they need,  
20 because, otherwise, they won't be able to accommodate  
21 this growth.

22           And they've had some industries that want to  
23 be there. They're on I-81. They've got, you know,  
24 everything there, the Shenandoah River, the Appalachian  
25 Regional Trail. It's one of the most beautiful places

1 you can get to as close as Washington, D.C. and  
2 Baltimore and New York City. It's just an opportunity.

3 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Okay. Thank you.

4 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* Thank you.

5 Thanks very much for those -- those responses.  
6 Senator Manchin.

7 *SENATOR MANCHIN:* Thank you.

8 I don't know whether it's working or not. Can  
9 you hear me?

10 Anyway, wanting to follow up on that, a lot  
11 of the money -- you know, the country is just about  
12 divided, not just "about." It really is divided between  
13 rural and urban.

14 The moneys that are available due to match  
15 down, do you find that there's less opportunities in  
16 rural, as far as the amount of money that you're  
17 competing for, versus what's going to urban?

18 And I'll tell you the reason why. I know in  
19 hospital funding and education funding, every time there  
20 is education in basically a category, whatever the  
21 category may be -- it could be water and sewer -- that  
22 most of the money is doubled up because the return on  
23 investment basically is the fed, because so many people  
24 in a concentrated area. If the federal government puts  
25 \$10 million where there's 200,000 people, there's a

1 better return, showing you're helping more people for  
2 less money, than if you go and spend \$10 million and  
3 there's only 50,000 people. That's the problem we have.

4           we've been trying to -- all of us have been  
5 trying to work to basically cut out 20 percent of any  
6 funding that comes from Washington must be dedicated to  
7 rural America, so that pot of money can only be accessed  
8 by rural parts of the country. If not, they get left  
9 behind.

10           And I don't know if you see that at all in,  
11 you know, I mean the demand you have and the need that  
12 we have in rural West Virginia -- which our whole state  
13 is rural -- is a lack of federal funding we need to  
14 match down to all these programs, whether you can match  
15 them or not, aren't available because of the federal  
16 dollars? Are you finding that?

17           **MR. MORGAN:** That's very true, Senator  
18 Manchin. You know, we talked about Parkersburg just  
19 because it was a recent project. They could go to the  
20 open market. Berkeley County could go to the open  
21 market. They could find funding in other locations,  
22 because they're large utilities. But the small  
23 utilities don't have that luxury. They've got to depend  
24 upon federal dollars; they've got to depend on state  
25 dollars.

1           And I'll go back to the reason I started in  
2 this industry, when I wanted to become a civil engineer  
3 at WVU and they said there's 75 percent grant funding  
4 from the SRF Clean Water Act.

5           We may never get back to that level of  
6 investment, but that's how the sewer systems got built  
7 in the United States was with that program, just like  
8 the interstate program.

9           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** Well, the whole thing I  
10 wanted to -- you know, 66 million people live in what we  
11 consider rural America. Sixty-six million. We want to  
12 make sure the funds are dedicated to where you-all have  
13 at least -- you know, if you're competing, you're  
14 competing with another rural part of the country, not  
15 with urban, not Chicago, not New York or any of that.  
16 So those are the things we want to make sure.

17           The next generation of water utility workers,  
18 we have a hard time finding utility workers, especially  
19 in smaller, rural areas, so we see a lot of deferred  
20 maintenance, or a lack of knowledge of how to maintain  
21 properly because they can't find the proper people to  
22 run the smaller PSDs.

23           Are you having that problem? Do you see that  
24 in West Virginia, and pumps and all that?

25           Todd, you might want to answer that one.

1           **MR. GRINSTEAD:** Yeah, we absolutely see that.  
2 Thank you for the question.

3           west Virginia Rural Water Association has a  
4 program now that we are operating. We're in a pilot  
5 program. We're about five months into it that where we  
6 have an apprenticeship program where we took on the -- I  
7 don't want to call it a burden, but we took on the task  
8 to do workforce development, and we're doing it in two  
9 ways. One is through our apprenticeship program where  
10 we have folks who want to be in the industry. We get  
11 them in there, get them certified.

12           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** What are you doing with the  
13 program -- how are you -- how are you advertising to  
14 have my child, my grandchild interested in that? How  
15 are you going about reaching out?

16           **MR. GRINSTEAD:** We'll be going to job fairs.  
17 We'll be going to high schools talking to guidance  
18 counselors. That's the second leg of this I was getting  
19 to, the fact that there's a lot of young folks don't  
20 even know we're an industry. All they know is they turn  
21 on their faucet, they get water; they flush the toilet,  
22 it's gone.

23           So we're taking that task on to try to market  
24 this industry to let people know -- young people know  
25 that this really is an industry, it's a good paying



1 industry, great benefits, longevity.

2 I mean, we're at the point now, over the next  
3 10 years, we're going to lose 30 to 50 percent of our  
4 workforce.

5 *SENATOR MANCHIN:* Anybody speaking to  
6 technical colleges teaching any of these courses that  
7 you recommend? Have you talked to them about it?

8 *MR. GRINSTEAD:* Yeah, there's some of that  
9 going on, and there's some partnerships right now we're  
10 working on. We're even looking at partnering to where  
11 we can get some young folks that are still in high  
12 school, get them into these water plants and wastewater  
13 plants and let them kind of see what goes on, and they  
14 can choose their career path based off of that. And  
15 then they can dovetail right into an apprenticeship  
16 program at a local utility or a utility around us. We  
17 are working on that.

18 *SENATOR MANCHIN:* Jason, finally, I know that  
19 Shelley's staff and my staff, all of us have been  
20 working on this internet -- internet connectivity. You  
21 guys have been right on the front edge of this and  
22 working it hard.

23 If we don't fix it now, it's never going to be  
24 done. If we can't get this state connected in the next  
25 few years with the amount of money that we're going to

1 be throwing into it and putting into it, then I think  
2 rural America will be lost and left behind forever.

3           So I hope that there's a plan -- a statewide  
4 plan. And I know that you-all showed us your regional,  
5 and it could be as a statewide model. Is anybody in  
6 Charleston and from the Council, are they all buying  
7 onto this? Because, as the money comes, the money  
8 you-all have, and if the -- when the infrastructure bill  
9 passes, there will be tremendous dedication, tremendous  
10 dedication towards internet connectivity.

11           Maps are horrible. We're trying to get those  
12 realigned. So give me your best shot at the  
13 opportunities that we have and if it can be done.

14           **MR. ROBERTS:** Thank you, Senator. That's a  
15 good question. And yes, we do -- we do have a plan for  
16 doing a statewide analysis of broadband needs, basically  
17 making a bigger version of what we showed to you with  
18 the southern West Virginia.

19           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** Right.

20           **MR. ROBERTS:** We actually received \$300,000,  
21 not Region 1, but Regional Optical Communications, our  
22 joint nonprofit.

23           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** Right.

24           **MR. ROBERTS:** We received \$300,000 from ARC,  
25 actually just last month, for the match to serve towards

1 a U.S. EDA application to essentially do a statewide  
2 broadband study replicating the ROC model, looking where  
3 eligible areas are --

4 *SENATOR MANCHIN:* You might want to explain  
5 your model, because your model basically showed how you  
6 could take that area and have everyone connected.

7 *MR. ROBERTS:* Yes, sir. We used HUD, CDBG  
8 funds, Region 1 PDC using Wyoming County as an  
9 applicant.

10 *SENATOR MANCHIN:* Right.

11 *MR. ROBERTS:* Region 4 PDC used Webster County  
12 as an applicant, and then we combined those funds and  
13 went to U.S. EDA. Essentially, we had \$500,000 to look  
14 at a regional broadband analysis, and we looked at the  
15 FCC eligible areas, eligible areas based on low to  
16 moderate income for HUD funds, for USDA funds, for  
17 distressed areas for ARC funds.

18 And we teed up about 80 projects,  
19 implementation projects. We had really detailed  
20 planning. I don't want to say engineering, but we had  
21 almost pre-engineering information. And that served as  
22 basically a playbook for the past four or five years.  
23 Whenever a pot of funds became available, we just  
24 plucked a project out of that ROC study, went to the  
25 funding sources. And we've submitted, I think, 26 or 28

1 applications, Senator, from that.

2           And that's exactly what we're trying to  
3 replicate through the statewide study.

4           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** well, I hope you-all push it  
5 through. And I want to thank all of you for that and  
6 thank you all for being here.

7           And I want to recognize Mayor Rappold back  
8 there, Rob, one of the most active, involved mayors in  
9 the state of West Virginia, and also a Woodrow Wilson  
10 graduate, and a dear friend. Thank you.

11           Thank you, Senator.

12           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** You bet. Thank you,  
13 Senator, Chairman, Governor, for joining us.

14           **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** There they go again.

15           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** There we go again, John.

16           **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** There they go again.

17           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Sorry. Mother of future  
18 governor. We'll see.

19           I remember when I was a kid coming back to  
20 Beckley visiting. I'd always go with my sister and stay  
21 with grandparents in Beaver -- Daniels. Daniels. They  
22 call it Daniels. And I'd spend nights there at my  
23 cousin's house in Beckley. My parents owned Patton's  
24 Market on Harper Road.

25           And I remember once one of my cousins, about

1 the same age as me – Ed Patton – his brother Dan, who  
2 was in the same high school graduating class with Gayle,  
3 and we'd work at Patton's Market. And one afternoon,  
4 Dan Patton, who was working at the local radio station  
5 said to Eddie, his younger brother, "How would you like  
6 to come to the radio station?"

7           And we said, well, we'd like to go there and  
8 see what radio stations are like, AM radio. And they  
9 let us go on the air. I can't believe that. I was,  
10 like, 12 or 13 years old, and they let us sing a song.  
11 And we sang.

12           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** This is going downhill fast.

13           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Robert Mitchum had a big  
14 movie called Thunder Road, so we all sang Thunder Road.

15           But I love music. That's where this is going.  
16 I love music. And I'm always looking for ways to  
17 connect ideas, and even legislation, with music. And  
18 the song that's going through my head right now is:  
19 "They say the best things in life are free, but you can  
20 give them to the birds and bees 'cause I want money.  
21 That's what I want."

22           And that is what we are hearing, there is a  
23 great need for money. There is a great demand for  
24 money. And as it turns out, we're like this close.  
25 what we're doing, we're this close. The federal

1 government is getting -- unleashing a torrent of money  
2 for all kinds of good causes: roads, highways, bridges,  
3 internet, rail, airports, water. I mean, we're this  
4 close.

5           And in the Old Testament, Moses on top of the  
6 mountain, you know, God said, you can go to the  
7 mountaintop and see the Promised Land, but you're not  
8 going to get there. It will come later.

9           well, we're at the mountaintop. We are at the  
10 mountaintop. We can see the Promised Land. We're like  
11 this close.

12           Like, Joe is a former quarterback, and you  
13 know how you're pushing the football, you're pushing the  
14 football down the line. You got it in the 20-yard line,  
15 your 10-yard line, you're like pounding it on the ground  
16 at the end zone. We're like on the end zone. We're  
17 inside the red zone. We're on the end zone. We're  
18 right at the end zone. We've got to get this ball into  
19 the -- into the end zone.

20           I have a couple -- let me just say, sometimes  
21 we have a diverse panel. What I will do is ask each of  
22 the witnesses to point out to us some of the points --  
23 major points and important points where you think there  
24 is agreement. Just maybe each of you like mention three  
25 areas where there is like really clear agreement.

1           And, Jason, why don't you -- and if you don't  
2 come up with three, two, but where do you think there's  
3 consensus in a path forward for us? And we would  
4 welcome that.

5           **MR. ROBERTS:** Thank you, Senator.

6           I think, based upon talking to funding  
7 agencies, and IJDC, and Water Development Authority  
8 officials, I think one of the biggest needs that we all  
9 agree on is the rate adjustments, you know, the minor,  
10 frequent rate increases. That's one.

11           I think the consolidation or regionalization  
12 is another one, and then some mechanism to fund  
13 operators is probably the third.

14           I think those are three massive issues facing  
15 the utilities, and so we all seem to be in consensus.  
16 The people that work in this in the trenches every day,  
17 that seems to be the high points for all of us.

18           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** All right. Good. Thank you  
19 for that.

20           wayne, please.

21           **MR. MORGAN:** I'm going to follow up on what  
22 Mr. Roberts just said is rate affordability is huge. It  
23 comes up in every municipal meeting that you go to when  
24 you're out there working with a municipality. And the  
25 SRFs are already set up to create rate equity.

1           In other words, if you have high rates, you  
2 qualify for a lot of grants. If you have low rates,  
3 you're going to get a loan. So I think the programs are  
4 already set up that way. Just continue to have the  
5 programs set up in such a manner such that we get rate  
6 equity as we move forward.

7           I won't mention the need for funds for  
8 infrastructure, because there's already a lot of  
9 agreement on that. But if we don't have funds in there  
10 for a workforce replenishment plan, we're going to have  
11 problems. And I think there's a lot of agreement that  
12 we need a rate force -- or a workforce plan in place so  
13 that we can get new workers as we move forward.

14           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Good.

15           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** Can I --

16           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Yes, please.

17           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** -- jump on that right there?

18           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Jump right in, Joe.

19           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** The Infrastructure Fund --  
20 the State Infrastructure Fund, it was based on -- rates  
21 were based on how it would help people based on were  
22 they paying at least the 3,000-gallon, you know, based  
23 on water.

24           Is that still how that's done? I thought it  
25 was thirty-some dollars, thirty-six to thirty-nine



1 dollars for the first 3,000 gallons.

2           **MR. MORGAN:** You're exactly right. We follow  
3 the SRF program pretty much. We're just a little bit  
4 higher, but 3,400 gallons of water is what an average  
5 West Virginian uses. That was established by the  
6 Council.

7           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** Yeah.

8           **MR. MORGAN:** And if your rates are less than  
9 one and a half percent of the MHI, then you're going to  
10 get a loan. If you're between one and a half percent  
11 and two percent, we're going to give you a  
12 half-a-million-dollar grant and lower rates.

13           And if you've got --

14           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** How many areas in our state  
15 are below? Because I could never get them to raise it.  
16 And I understood the hardships, but then it was a  
17 conundrum because they couldn't qualify. We wouldn't  
18 even consider them when they were so far off. They  
19 wouldn't raise their rates.

20           **MR. MORGAN:** Well, that conundrum is what  
21 we're talking about here, and what Mr. Roberts mentioned  
22 is when you have rates less than one percent of the MHI,  
23 you're going to qualify for 20-year funding at  
24 2.75 percent from us, which is not a great rate when  
25 you're giving one percent, 40-year money to people that

1 have high rates.

2           So we need to address that issue and the  
3 reluctance, and it's probably an education or training  
4 issue for municipalities, utility managers, others,  
5 that, hey customers, there's a cost to this service and  
6 we've got to recognize it so that we can keep your  
7 infrastructure up-to-date.

8           Thank you.

9           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** This time yesterday I was  
10 in Georgetown, Delaware. We have three counties in  
11 Delaware. The southern most county is Sussex. It's  
12 very rural. We raise more chickens there than any  
13 county in America.

14           And we were having a ribbon-cutting at  
15 Delaware Technical Community College in Sussex County,  
16 Sussex County campus. And there was a ribbon-cutting  
17 for a project that we've been working on for a number of  
18 years dealing with creating trained people who can work  
19 on our cars, trucks, and vans, little ones, big ones.  
20 And we've heard for years, people are saying we need --  
21 we need people to work on cars, trucks, and vans. Our  
22 poultry industry says, "we need people to work on our  
23 big trucks, and we can't find them, can't keep them."

24           So Del Tech created an institute, if you will,  
25 training academy, for folks to do just that, and we had

1 the ribbon cutting on it yesterday.

2           The reason why I mention it is because the  
3 state provided some money, the auto dealers themselves  
4 kicked in and raised over \$1 million on a \$5-million  
5 project. The poultry integrators kicked in. They  
6 raised close to \$1 million as well. The State kicked  
7 in. Through Del Tech, they raised about another million  
8 dollars. We got about \$2 million from EDA, Economic  
9 Development Administration, and so they built a  
10 community wealth, if you will, to provide help, and it  
11 works.

12           And that's (telephone ringing) -- would  
13 somebody get that, please. Maybe it's the President  
14 calling. I recognize that ring. I'm just kidding.

15           All right. Thank you. There we go. Good  
16 work. Thank you.

17           Anyway, it's a shared responsibility. That's  
18 my point. It's a shared responsibility. And some of  
19 it's on local folks, local communities, rate holders,  
20 and then so forth. Some of it is on us, and we're  
21 trying hard to deliver. And we're that close to doing  
22 it.

23           Okay. Please, Todd, you go right ahead.

24           **MR. GRINSTAD:** I occur with these gentlemen  
25 here on their comments. You know, workforce development

1 is very passionate from us, as you can tell.

2           National Rural Water has a program where they  
3 receive grant money from USDA Rural Development, and  
4 that trickles down to the states. So it allows us to  
5 open up our workforce development team to go out and  
6 market our industry and get folks interested.

7           we also have a little bit of help through a  
8 grant through the ARC which helps with that, so we're  
9 trying to build this team to go out and market. We hope  
10 to be running some commercial ads on television, you  
11 know, local television, just to get interest into our  
12 system, so we've got a lot going on. We've just getting  
13 ramped up. Like I say, it's a work in progress, but  
14 we're working there.

15           And we're a little bit behind the eight ball  
16 in West Virginia. There's an operator shortage. It's  
17 not catastrophic, like it's going to be if we don't do  
18 something. So we're now to the point to where we're --  
19 we're ready to do something. We're going to market.

20           Like I said, we're going to go in every high  
21 school and talk to guidance counselors. We're going to  
22 do job fairs. We're going to really work hard at trying  
23 to get them interested in our industry to replenish the  
24 operator shortage.

25           And in the process of that, through our

1 program, it's not just placing them in a job, it's  
2 training them. They get intense training throughout  
3 their process to become certified operators. So they  
4 get more than just studying for a test and taking a  
5 test. They get a lot more safety, a lot more hands-on  
6 procedural stuff, so it's going to be a great program.

7 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* The point on training,  
8 worker training, we hear this in Delaware. We hear  
9 this, actually, across the country, as you know.

10 I went out for a run this morning. It was  
11 just turning daylight. And we stayed at the Marriott  
12 Courtyard on -- just off of Harper Road coming off the  
13 turnpike. And I almost got run over about ten times,  
14 but I finished my run and lived to tell about it. But I  
15 started counting the number of businesses where there  
16 were signs out that say "Hiring," "Help wanted," "Help  
17 Needed," and I stopped counting at twenty, and there  
18 were more after that.

19 You talked about the opportunities for people  
20 to work to provide clean drinking water, wastewater for  
21 folks, and there's just some need for workers. We're in  
22 a big need that we have in the country is just for  
23 people to go to work, be willing to be trained. And we  
24 have to be able to train them and incentivize them to  
25 fill the jobs that are needed.

1 I need to take a quick phone call, and I'll be  
2 right back. And I'm going to ask Senator Capito and  
3 Senator Manchin just to ask maybe the next round of  
4 questions. I'll be right back.

5 *SENATOR CAPITO:* well, thank you again. I am  
6 going to say that I know you probably notice I'm  
7 coughing. I've been tested. I want everybody to know  
8 I've had a cold, which none of us has had for two years,  
9 and it's miserable. So I apologize for that.

10 Mr. Grinstead, I wanted to ask you on the --  
11 you mentioned in your -- in your remarks that the  
12 regulatory burdens that -- and you were -- you were  
13 pleased that the bill that was coming forward didn't  
14 place any additional -- or too many additional  
15 regulatory burdens.

16 I know that, for instance, in the pending  
17 legislations of PFAS and other kinds of chemicals there  
18 is a -- a movement to have all these water systems be  
19 able to test. Could you give us sort of a slice of life  
20 of how many -- how many different things you do have to  
21 test for?

22 I mean, you don't have to give them all to me,  
23 but, I mean, how complicated is this getting? And are  
24 we throwing out the old stressors on the system that  
25 are no longer a problem for us, maybe we've solved the

1 problem or we're not using the materials anymore and  
2 it's not getting into the water systems?

3 Are we modernizing that regulatory regime or  
4 is it just piling on and piling on?

5 *MR. GRINSTEAD:* I think, for the most part,  
6 it's just piling on. The situation with the PFAS has  
7 grown so much and, you know, it's only produced in a  
8 handful of locations in the United States, but it's  
9 showing up in nearly every water system out there, just  
10 from the use, from manufacturing, and all the situations  
11 that way.

12 One thing with that is that water systems get  
13 the water out of the ground, they get it out of the  
14 rivers, surface water, what have you. They do their  
15 best, and they do a great job in cleaning up the water  
16 to send it out to the customers. The problem is, they  
17 didn't place that in the water, you know.

18 So what we really want to urge legislation to  
19 do is to not look at the utility and set an MCL, or  
20 maximum contaminate level. That way, if a water system  
21 has this in their system, they get a fine, if you will,  
22 because they have this in their water. Well, we've got  
23 to work on the source, where it came from and how to  
24 remove it --

25 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Uh-huh.

1           **MR. GRINSTEAD:** -- without penalizing,  
2 especially the smaller water systems. You can't  
3 penalize them for something they have no control over.

4           **SENATOR CAPITO:** Thank you. Yeah. I mean, I  
5 think, obviously with the situation in Parkersburg and  
6 Martinsburg with the PFAS found in the water systems,  
7 and then the carbon, the \$4-million fix in Berkeley  
8 County, the DOD, at our urging, did pay for that because  
9 it was caused by the base, the fire fighting foam.

10           But this is all over the country. I will tell  
11 you this: we did have an expert from the West Virginia  
12 Department of Environmental Protection testify before  
13 our committee, and they tested every rural water system  
14 for PFAS and only found it in three, the two already but  
15 also one in the northern part of the state in Glen Dale.

16           So that was actually a big relief, because we  
17 were worried, as exactly you said, that it's everywhere  
18 and what levels. So we're keeping our eye on that,  
19 understanding that to test, the cost of the test, and  
20 then the mitigation is what you're saying, don't  
21 penalize me, because I have it; I haven't done anything  
22 to the water --

23           **MR. GRINSTEAD:** Right.

24           **SENATOR CAPITO:** -- to get it, but I need help  
25 to mitigate to meet the standards.



1           **MR. GRINSTEAD:** Yes.

2           **SENATOR CAPITO:** And I think that's an  
3 excellent point.

4           On resiliency, we've placed a lot of emphasis  
5 on resiliency in a lot of things, but particularly in  
6 drinking water and wastewater, and, you know, to be able  
7 to withstand extreme weather, weather events related to  
8 climate change.

9           So what do you think about, Mr. Morgan, when  
10 you think about resiliency in systems? You've obviously  
11 dealt with a very large system. How are you looking at  
12 that in your new position?

13           **MR. MORGAN:** Well, resiliency is tremendously  
14 important. And as the United States has faced -- there  
15 has been some severe weather events recently, so being  
16 able to react to those, having the emergency centers set  
17 up, having funds available, one of the things that Rural  
18 Water and Mr. Grinstead has done, and this was  
19 implemented probably ten years ago, was the abilities  
20 for the utilities to share operators and workers and  
21 equipment.

22           So probably the best thing that's happened in  
23 the past decade that could be used as a model, and maybe  
24 it is in place across the United States, is if you have  
25 a flood that involves Clay, Kanawha, Fayette County,

1 which we did four years ago, you can borrow people from  
2 Parkersburg, Morgantown, wherever you need to, to get  
3 down there to help out and meet that need and help them  
4 get everything addressed.

5           So that's one of the resiliencies west  
6 Virginia has put in place that seems to be working very  
7 well.

8           **SENATOR CAPITO:** So, Mr. Roberts, I think in  
9 terms of, as we take this testimony back to Washington  
10 and Senator Carper's team, every state has a different  
11 way of cobbling together all their water systems. And,  
12 you know, we have a lot of PSDs that are small. Some of  
13 them are consolidating, like Putnam consolidated theirs,  
14 some in eastern Kanawha County and other parts of the  
15 state have consolidated theirs.

16           Am I reading your comments into the  
17 regionalization to mean that -- is that what you're  
18 talking about when you're talking about regionalizing?

19           **MR. ROBERTS:** Yes, ma'am. I think -- I think  
20 the regionalization will serve a couple of purposes.  
21 Consolidation is maybe what Mr. Morgan will call it.  
22 But again, you realize the economies of scale, and it  
23 also addresses the workforce shortage. Even though  
24 these utilities may not be physically connected, you do  
25 have a larger workforce, a larger pool, if you have

1 maybe a countywide PSD --

2 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Uh-huh.

3 *MR. ROBERTS:* -- to where, you know, if you  
4 just have one operator for a system and that operator  
5 has to go to a doctor's appointment or something  
6 happens, there's no backup.

7 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Right.

8 *MR. ROBERTS:* But if you have a regional  
9 system, you have a larger pool to pull from and you can  
10 spread that workload among more people.

11 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Right. And I realize that  
12 that can be a very politically sensitive situation in a  
13 lot of different areas. So I know that sounds easy, but  
14 it's not as easy as it sounds.

15 The other thing I think in terms of workforce  
16 is that, when I began this adventure of representing  
17 different parts of the state, I realized that early on  
18 the water operator also emptied the parking meters, made  
19 sure the trash was getting picked up, and was the  
20 nightwatchman, you know, at the county courthouse. And  
21 so everybody's -- you know, just the strains on that  
22 particular individual. So if they were out, the whole  
23 system goes down.

24 I know that we've professionalized more of the  
25 requirements for certifications. How can technology

1 bring us forward as we're modernizing our systems? I  
2 mean, help me understand what technology is. Is it more  
3 computers, more gauges, more -- less, you know, out in  
4 your truck trying to figure out where you've got  
5 leakages and all that? Is that how the modernization of  
6 the technology -- Mr. Morgan, you might want to answer  
7 that.

8           **MR. MORGAN:** I'm going to use Mr. Roberts's  
9 birthplace as an example. McDowell County PSD is  
10 assuming ownership of a lot of coal mine-owned water  
11 systems. And we just had an emergency in Davy in  
12 McDowell County. So Davy doesn't necessarily want to  
13 become part of McDowell County PSD, but the first step  
14 we're taking is tying in their telemetry system.

15           They've got an operator at Davy that does  
16 everything you just said and more, and he probably works  
17 for gas money, and he's retired from a job. And when  
18 he's no longer able to do that, Davy is not going to  
19 have water. So what they're doing as a first step for  
20 \$100,000 worth of critical need funds that Region 1  
21 applied for, is they're going to tie their telemetry  
22 system into McDowell PSD, which is the larger utility in  
23 that county, so that if this person gets a cold, has to  
24 miss two or three days, that McDowell County will know  
25 the level in the tanks, can turn on and off the

1 groundwater plant, because groundwater, you know what  
2 the quality is and you can run it automatically.

3           **SENATOR CAPITO:** Thank you.

4           Senator Manchin?

5           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** Yeah. Just what I want to  
6 touch on is basically the sewer systems that we have in  
7 West Virginia, well, really around the country, because  
8 they were done, and the way they were done in my little  
9 town of Farmington – we were so tickled to get a sewer  
10 system back in the '60s and '70s – they tied into the  
11 storm sewers, because that was the easiest, quickest way  
12 for us to handle.

13           well, we know when you have heavy rains, the  
14 effluent that overflows into the creek, which we were  
15 trying to prevent from going in the creek in the first  
16 place, we're back to where we started from.

17           So the only thing I want to know now, that's  
18 probably the biggest cost, we have to separate storm  
19 water from sewer, so that basically storm water goes to  
20 the creek and sewer basically goes into the wastewater  
21 treatment plant.

22           Next of all, are we -- do we mandate that any  
23 plans for new be done and separated, so we don't want to  
24 approve federal government's money or your, you know,  
25 state matches or whatever, doesn't go to a sewer system,

1 just because they need a sewer system, that doesn't have  
2 the separation?

3 Are they still allowing them to do a plan  
4 where they can, you know, join them?

5 And, also, are we separating any? Do we have  
6 towns or cities who are separating them? And are they  
7 trying to separate them?

8 So, basically, where are we at in the sewer  
9 systems?

10 **MR. MORGAN:** Great question. And as I  
11 mentioned, the Needs Assessment that the Infrastructure  
12 and Job Development Council did identified \$1 billion  
13 worth of need associated with what I term --

14 **SENATOR MANCHIN:** That involved separation and  
15 all that?

16 **MR. MORGAN:** That's the cost of the separation  
17 because of overflows that occur.

18 what's happening? Bluefield is doing  
19 separation. Essentially, you put in an 8-inch sanitary  
20 sewer, or a 10-inch, or a 12-inch, whatever you may  
21 need, and then that 36- and 42-inch combined sewer  
22 becomes your storm water utility. So it is being  
23 separated.

24 Clarksburg had a 30-inch line that was  
25 potentially collapsing. A building shouldn't have been

1 built over top of it, but you've got a multi-story  
2 building. Before they could get funding to take care  
3 of the structural integrity of that 30-inch storm  
4 waterline, they had to separate the sanitary sewer out  
5 of it as part of the project.

6           So that is being required. Anytime we go in  
7 and work on something or replace something, that's being  
8 addressed.

9           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** We're not approving any new  
10 ones, are we, unless they're separated?

11           **MR. MORGAN:** Really, the funding, whether it's  
12 SRF or the state addresses the wastewater. So the need,  
13 and I know it's a subsequent need, probably is to  
14 address storm water.

15           Some of the Clean Water SRF funds are being  
16 set aside for storm water, but those systems are just as  
17 old as the wastewater systems, so trying to find funding  
18 for that is probably a future project or something that  
19 needs to be addressed.

20           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** That is probably one of the  
21 most challenging things we have, especially for the  
22 environment, because any heavy rain, it just goes right  
23 over into the creeks again, which we try to take it out  
24 of.

25           So I don't know if that's part of the rule

1 making or whatever, Senator Carper, on that, and Senator  
2 Capito. Maybe you-all could look into that, if you  
3 could.

4 *SENATOR CAPITO:* John's nodding.

5 (Simultaneous speaking and laughter.)

6 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* John, thanks. You can't see  
7 their lips move when we speak, but if those masks  
8 weren't on, you could.

9 All right. I got a couple questions and then  
10 I'm going to ask Senator Capito and Senator Manchin if  
11 there are any closing statements they want to give, and  
12 then we'll wrap it up.

13 I want to come back to Todd and to Wayne.  
14 We're not as informal in Washington. I mean, it would  
15 be Mr. Grinstead and Mr. Morgan, but I hope you can deal  
16 with worse things here. It feels more like West  
17 Virginia.

18 But a question for Todd and a question for  
19 Wayne. Just for a little bit of set the table, EPA has  
20 a grant program, as you may know, that's designed to  
21 provide assistance to small and disadvantaged  
22 communities to improve their drinking water resources.  
23 We talked a little about that already. It's a program  
24 that provides assistance to underserved communities that  
25 have no household drinking water or wastewater services



1 or are served by a public water system that's out of  
2 compliance with federal drinking water standards.

3 All right. My question: would a program like  
4 this be of value to the wastewater community? And if  
5 so, what are some factors we should consider in setting  
6 a grant program up under the Clean water Act?

7 Todd and Wayne, any comments you have would be  
8 welcome.

9 **MR. GRINSTEAD:** Absolutely, the wastewater  
10 industry could definitely prosper from that. You know,  
11 you have the same issues in wastewater that you do  
12 water. A lot of that would be geared toward making sure  
13 the technology is up and, you know, doing reliable  
14 process through waste treatment.

15 Operator certification, operator technical  
16 assistance, is a big part of keeping them up on the  
17 technology to be able to do a better job.

18 wayne?

19 **MR. MORGAN:** What came up earlier, and it's  
20 called Green Funding with the State Revolving Fund  
21 Programs is the decentralized treatment. So in areas  
22 where they don't have drinking water service, the same  
23 thing could apply for wastewater. If you don't have  
24 service, there's green technology and expanding upon  
25 that and putting in the decentralized systems.

1 I was lucky enough to be at Watoga State Park  
2 the other day --

3 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* Watauga -- in Watauga  
4 County? No. That's not in the North Carolina, is it?

5 *SENATOR CAPITO:* Uh-uh.

6 *MR. MORGAN:* No; this is a state park in West  
7 Virginia.

8 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* My wife is from Watauga  
9 County, North Carolina.

10 *MR. MORGAN:* But, in any case, I got to go  
11 trout fishing on the Williams River, and I went into  
12 essentially what you call the porta potty, but that was  
13 the cleanest porta potty I've ever been in in my life.  
14 So sometimes old technology becomes new, and in areas  
15 that don't have service that have recreational value,  
16 these decentralized systems, or even something as simple  
17 as a porta potty, or having a latrine, makes a whole lot  
18 of sense. And if it's maintained and well taken care  
19 of, it provides a great service.

20 *CHAIRMAN CARPER:* My father is looking down  
21 today, just remember, saying, "Just use some common  
22 sense." There you go.

23 Anyone else on that question? Anybody else?

24 Okay. I have a second question I'd like to  
25 ask. This will be for Jason. And aging water systems,

1 declining populations, economic distress, and other  
2 factors are making it harder for thousands of small  
3 community water systems to keep up with day-to-day  
4 operating and system maintenance costs. We talked about  
5 that quite a bit. Our infrastructure plan had to ensure  
6 for upgrades. Additionally, federal funding cannot be  
7 used to perform routine system maintenance.

8           Now to my question: How can the federal  
9 government better support small systems in identifying  
10 problems and performing routine maintenance so that  
11 problems are addressed before they become major and  
12 catastrophic, please?

13           Prevention is worth a pound of cure, am I  
14 right?

15           **MR. ROBERTS:** Right. Thank you, Senator.  
16 That's a great question.

17           Again, I think you're all very aware of the  
18 issues that these small rural systems face. I really  
19 think that the role for some federal funding could be  
20 maybe have programs specifically dedicated just to  
21 maintenance and improvement of a system. You know,  
22 usually when we go for grant funding for a project, it's  
23 for a massive repair, or an expansion, or a new system  
24 somewhere.

25           Maybe have some micro loan or some micro grant

1 program dedicated specifically for just general  
2 maintenance. If they don't have the capability  
3 in-house, maybe they could contract that out to a  
4 larger -- larger firm or something.

5 I think that's one thing that's very much  
6 needed. That would be one -- I think an easy -- that  
7 would be some low-hanging fruit, Senator, quite frankly.

8 **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** We haven't used that term  
9 today, low-hanging fruit. We're always looking for  
10 some. And it's good to find it. Thank you for that.

11 And a last question, if I could, for the  
12 entire panel, and it deals with project priorities.

13 According to a recommendation from West  
14 Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council, I  
15 believe it was last year in 2020, in their Needs  
16 Assessment work, projects receiving funding commitments  
17 must continue to be based on -- this is a quote --  
18 "objective uniform criteria." A quote.

19 And the most important criteria is the  
20 project's readiness to proceed to construction after  
21 receiving its funding commitment, so like shovel-ready.

22 Question: what other criteria should be used  
23 to make project funding decisions? what other criteria  
24 should be used to make project funding decisions?

25 How does these criteria -- how do these

1 criteria account for the unique and often times critical  
2 needs of small rural and disadvantaged communities?

3           And Todd, would you lead us on that one,  
4 please? You'll have the first -- the first swing at  
5 that one.

6           **MR. GRINSTEAD:** Yeah, thank you for that. I'm  
7 kind of at a loss of words there.

8           Wayne, would you --

9           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Yeah, let's pass it down to  
10 Wayne. Think about it and we'll come right back.

11           This happens to me more and more, especially  
12 as I get older. You're not that old.

13           **MR. MORGAN:** Thank you for the question.

14           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** You're fine.

15           **MR. MORGAN:** And we're lucky enough to have  
16 funding that's based upon a readiness to proceed, so I  
17 do agree that that's a high priority. But we also have  
18 outfalls along trout streams, along the Hatfield and  
19 McCoy Trail. And if you get rid of those outfalls, you  
20 create tremendous economic opportunity for people that  
21 want to do the four-wheel trail riding throughout the  
22 United States that's growing every day. And if they're  
23 looking at a trout stream that has an outfall for every  
24 house that they go by, that's not a very attractive  
25 situation.

1           So I guess the other criteria is the pollution  
2 alleviation or the elimination of pollution that's  
3 occurring where we don't have public wastewater systems  
4 along potential recreational areas in the state of West  
5 Virginia, or throughout the United States.

6           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** That reminds me a little bit  
7 of what we used to have in our Beaver Creek all those  
8 years ago.

9           Back to Jason.

10          **MR. ROBERTS:** Thank you, Senator.

11          I think -- I think one of the criteria you  
12 could use is maybe put some sort of weight on potential  
13 economic development. Right now, the way it's  
14 structured, if we want to do an expansion for maybe an  
15 industrial park or tourism, we really have to have  
16 somebody on the hook. We really have to know who's  
17 going to come in, and somebody really almost has to sign  
18 on the dotted line.

19          One of the things that you mentioned in your  
20 opening statement was, really, the government can't  
21 create jobs, but we can create a nurturing environment.  
22 And I really think that that's something if -- if we can  
23 take some federal funding and maybe expand water and  
24 sewer service to an area we know is going to be  
25 developable, that would really create that nurturing

1 environment.

2           And that may be something that weighs more  
3 heavily when we're going to the state or the federal  
4 funders in terms of, you know, well, it's not here now,  
5 but we know that there are people wanting to put a  
6 series of cabins in to cater to the trout fishers or to  
7 the Hatfield McCoy riders. So I think that's a criteria  
8 as well is the potential for development.

9           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Thanks for those comments.  
10           Todd, you want to take another swing at that  
11 one?

12           **MR. GRINSTEAD:** Yeah, and I totally agree  
13 there that, you know, as far as the housing, industrial,  
14 whatever, you can have nothing without water and  
15 wastewater. I mean, so it has to be there, it has to be  
16 available, and you have to have a plan to move forward  
17 to be able to provide that. So, you know, some  
18 planning, some countywide planning or whatever, would be  
19 appropriate, but just to do decent planning and be able  
20 to be ready to move forward when these projects come  
21 along.

22           Yes, you can't make them shovel ready, but you  
23 can make them pretty close. You could at least have a  
24 good plan to fall back on to speed up your time to  
25 develop.

1           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Okay. Thank you. Thanks  
2 for those comments.

3           For some closing words, Senator Capito.

4           **SENATOR CAPITO:** Thank you. I want to thank  
5 the witnesses's excellent testimony. I'm very proud of  
6 the representation that you've given of our state and  
7 certainly our depth of knowledge and our, I think,  
8 vision for improving the water and wastewater  
9 availabilities throughout the state for a lot of  
10 different reasons.

11           I think as we've talked a lot about the  
12 bipartisan bill and the large drinking water and  
13 wastewater bill that we passed unanimously out of  
14 committee and 89-to-2 out of the Senate floor that we  
15 hope will come to the President's desk, help is on the  
16 way in larger amounts of money to all of these.

17           The rural set-asides are great. The  
18 decentralized systems, which also include septic tanks  
19 of \$50 million, something that never quite gets funded,  
20 other things, workforce development that we've talked  
21 about, this is the biggest and most robust water bill  
22 that's ever been -- I think it's an increase of about  
23 35 percent.

24           Here's where my concern, and I'm, you know,  
25 ready to do whatever I can do, but you guys are the



1 experts here. We can't squander this opportunity. We  
2 can't say, just because there's, you know, a lot of  
3 money that we -- that we have 26 projects and we're  
4 going to fund all of them a little bit or -- and we have  
5 a tendency to do that, because we want to make everybody  
6 kind of happy instead of -- I think we need to really  
7 prioritize.

8           And, Wayne, this is where you guys really come  
9 in. Really prioritize what can make the biggest bang  
10 for our buck. Complete these projects so that you're  
11 not -- you don't have a bridge to nowhere -- sorry,  
12 Mercer County -- or something of that nature, and so that  
13 you have the completion and we get the results from it.

14           And, you know, in some ways, we could get it  
15 all the way here if we combine our city and town money,  
16 if we combine the state money -- I hope the governor is  
17 listening -- and other things. We could really make,  
18 not just little strides here, but huge strides into  
19 addressing a lot of the problems that we've talked about  
20 today. So any way that we can help, we certainly want  
21 to.

22           I want to again thank the Chairman for  
23 highlighting this in our state and his home county in  
24 Raleigh, and I look forward to working with all of you  
25 in the future.

1           And thanks again to Senator Manchin, my buddy  
2 there, to -- this is something that there's no daylight  
3 between us on these issues. We're working hand in hand.

4           And I want to thank my staff for preparing us  
5 and preparing you-all for what I think was an excellent  
6 presentation.

7           Thank you.

8           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Thank you so much.

9           I yield to Senator Manchin for any closing  
10 statements, thoughts that he has, and I have a few  
11 things I want to add, and we'll call it a morning.

12           Senator.

13           **SENATOR MANCHIN:** Thank you, Senator Carper  
14 and Senator Capito, for allowing me to participate with  
15 you-all.

16           I'm so impressed with all three of you and the  
17 knowledge you have and the grasp of this. Shelley said  
18 it all, she really did, when she said we've got one  
19 shot. We've never had a shot like this in my lifetime,  
20 nor do I ever see it coming again for quite some time.  
21 This is one time you got to get everybody's attention.

22           what can we do? what can we finish? we don't  
23 need a bunch of starters. Give me something we can  
24 complete, because now there is enough money in the mix.

25           The Governor has money. They should be able

1 to match down. The cities have money; the counties have  
2 money. And there's a lot more coming. And it's just  
3 for this. This is the one time rural America has a  
4 chance to catch up, so anything that we can do to help  
5 make sure that there's a clear, direct path of how this  
6 is to get done.

7           without the internet -- I think you've heard  
8 Shelley and myself talking about this, and our staffs  
9 have been totally linked and hooked up on this one.  
10 without total connectivity -- and I've said this, in the  
11 1930s, my grandparents didn't have electricity. Most of  
12 rural America didn't have electricity. Only 10 percent  
13 of West Virginians had electricity, if you can believe  
14 it. And if it wasn't for rural electrification -- and  
15 if they can do that in the '30s, in 1936 starting that,  
16 and be able to get every house -- almost every house in  
17 America, no matter how rural it may be, linked somehow  
18 connected to a wire, we sure as heck ought to be able to  
19 connect everyone to the internet.

20           And I look at that and I look at that  
21 basically infrastructure, that need, the same as I look  
22 at electricity. You know, the quality of life increased  
23 tremendously, and it will do the same tenfold over.

24           This is one time we cannot lose this  
25 opportunity. We're not going to come this way again.

1 Fixing our water and sewer systems, fixing them and just  
2 drinkable water. There's not a town in America, not a  
3 citizen who shouldn't be hooked up to a more sanitary  
4 system.

5           So I just implore you-all, and Senator Carper  
6 and Senator Capito's staff, and also the Committee that  
7 they head up, there's tremendous support about you. You  
8 got West Virginia, West Virginia, and West Virginia. If  
9 we don't do it now, gang, it ain't gonna happen. It  
10 really is not.

11           But thank you. You've been more than  
12 insightful on this and helpful and very professional.  
13 Proud of each of you. Now it's time to really go after  
14 it, gang. Go after it. Thank you.

15           Thank you, Senator.

16           **CHAIRMAN CARPER:** Before we adjourn, I have a  
17 couple of closing remarks, but I want to do a little  
18 housekeeping first. I want to ask Madam's consent to  
19 submit for the record a variety of materials that  
20 include letters from stakeholders and other materials  
21 that relate to today's hearing. And if there is no  
22 objection at either hearing, that will become a big part  
23 of the record.

24           Additionally, senators are going to be allowed  
25 to submit questions for the record up to the close of

1 business on Thursday, October 28th -- Thursday,  
2 October 28th -- and we will compile in our committee  
3 those questions and we'll send them out to each of you.  
4 We ask that you try to reply to us by November 11th. We  
5 got a couple of weeks after that. And we appreciate  
6 that.

7           I just want to say to Senator Capito how --  
8 and Senator Manchin how grateful I am to be here. If  
9 you want to put a spotlight on a state where there's  
10 enormous need, where there's an enormous need for clean  
11 water to drink and a way to deal with waste in  
12 appropriate and thoughtful ways, it's West Virginia.

13           I love this place, and I know Shelley and Joe  
14 love it as much or more than I do. It's not just a  
15 coincidence that we ended up with this field hearing in  
16 Beckley, West Virginia. We're here for a reason. We  
17 are here for a reason.

18           Shelley, I don't know if you ever served in  
19 the House with a minister, African American from  
20 Pennsylvania, Bill Gray, but he and I served together  
21 until he ended up, he quit. And he -- he used to tell  
22 us this story. He told us a story about -- I never knew  
23 if it was a true story, but it's a great story. I'm  
24 going to share it with you today.

25           And it's a story in a rural part of the

1 country where there's communities, not like a place with  
2 stoplights and, you know, even paved roads, but people  
3 lived there. Families lived there and grew up there.  
4 And they had -- part of their water infrastructure was  
5 an old well where people could literally come and lower  
6 into the well a bucket and pull the water up and use it  
7 for their homes.

8           And sometimes there's a stone structure, a  
9 locks-like circular and -- around the top of wells to  
10 keep people from falling in. And one day -- kids liked  
11 to play and they'd walk around the top of the rocks.  
12 And one day a kid fell in. And the fall -- there was  
13 water in the well, and you could hear the kid splash  
14 when they hit the water and started crying for help.  
15 And the other kids were like alarmed and scared and they  
16 just ran off and ran back to their houses and tell  
17 mommy, mommy and daddy, so-and-so has fallen into the  
18 well and we've got to save him.

19           And people went into their basements and into  
20 their barns, they went into their garages, trying to  
21 find a piece of rope to tie together so they could save  
22 the kid. And everybody found a rope, some longer than  
23 others, and they tied the ropes together and they put  
24 the community rope, if you will, down into the well and  
25 saved this -- saved the child.

1           We -- every one of us in this room and across  
2 west Virginia and the country always have a piece of  
3 rope. All of us have a piece of rope, and every one of  
4 our states, especially this state and this county,  
5 there's a lot of kids, not literally in the well, but a  
6 lot of kids are in the well, and they need some help.  
7 And we have the ability to tie our ropes together and  
8 lower them into the well and bring kids to safety and  
9 families to safety and to a brighter future.

10           The question is: will we do it? Can we do  
11 it? And believe it or not, the longest piece of rope  
12 for this undertaking is the one that we bring, the  
13 federal government. Huge amount of resources,  
14 \$55 billion, I think, if I'm not mistaken, just in the  
15 infrastructure bill alone. Fifty-five billion, and a  
16 lot of it will go to those in need. A lot of it will  
17 go.

18           what's missing here is the -- you have to have  
19 the tied rope together, lower it into the well, and you  
20 got to lift the kid to safety. And that's sort of like  
21 where we are right now. That's where we are right now.  
22 We need to lift this kid to safety, sort of like getting  
23 the ball in the end zone. We are this close, this close  
24 to getting it done.

25           And nobody's worked harder than Shelley Capito

1 with Joe Biden in the earlier part of this year, and  
2 more recently, Senator Manchin or the President in this  
3 part of the year, to try to get us to the end zone.  
4 we're this close. This close. We got to get the ball  
5 in the end zone.

6           we got to get that kid out of the well. And  
7 if we do, not just West Virginia, but this entire nation  
8 will be better for it. Better for it. Let's do it.

9           And with that, this committee is adjourned,  
10 and thank you all for participating. This has been a  
11 great hearing. Thanks so much.

12                           (Environment and Public Works  
13                           Subcommittee field hearing adjourned at  
14                           11:56 a.m., October 14, 2021.)

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STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA)

:SS

CERTIFICATE

COUNTY OF RALEIGH )

I, TERESA L. HARVEY, a Registered Diplomat  
Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, and Notary Public  
in and for the State of West Virginia:

DO HEREBY CERTIFY that as the duly-appointed  
stenotype reporter, I took in stenotype the proceedings  
had in the above-entitled matter on the 14th day of  
October, 2021, and that the attached is a true and  
correct transcription of the proceedings so taken.

Dated at Beckley, West Virginia, this 22nd day  
of October, 2021.



Teresa L. Harvey

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